HADES SYNDROME
THE LAST GIG
BY MICHAEL FELDMANN
art
THENEXTART

CHAPTER 1

HADES-SYNDROME
THE LAST GIG
BY MICHAEL FELDMANN

..IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

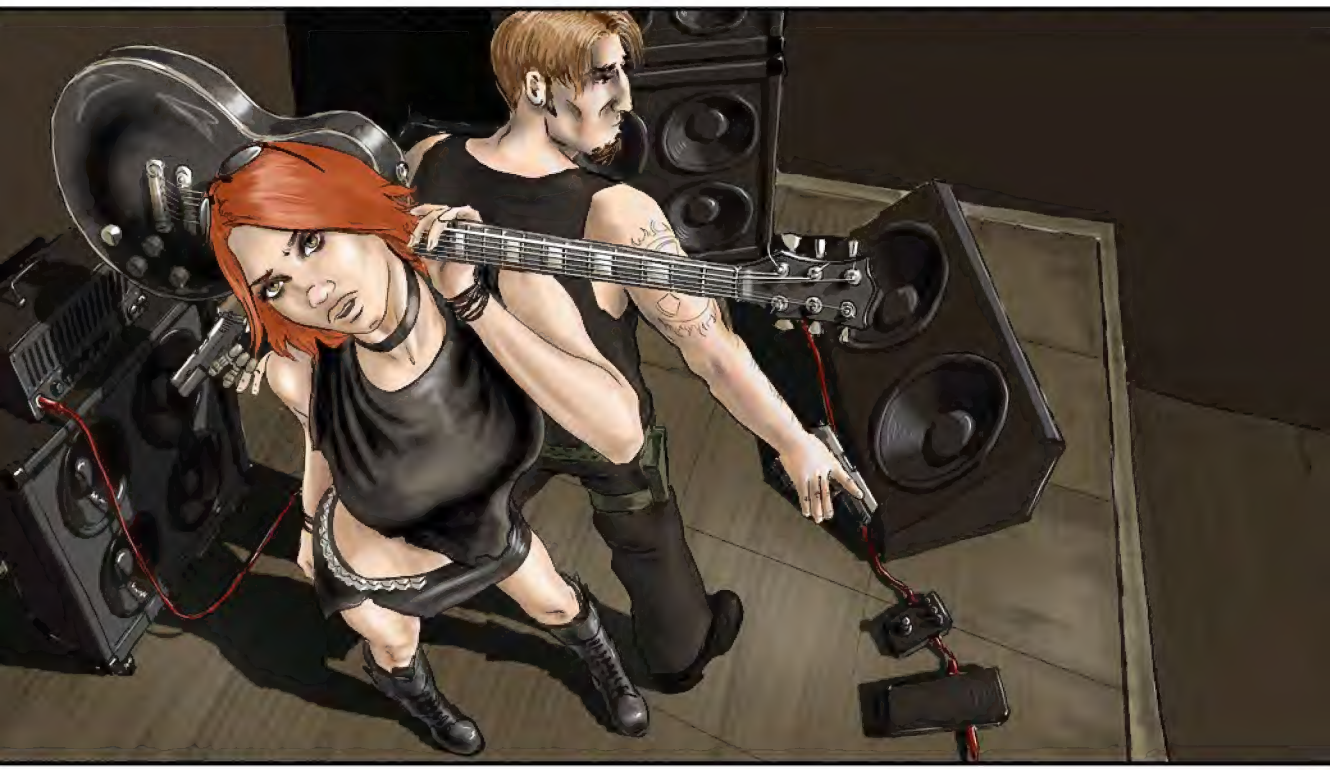
TWENTY YEARS OF GLOBAL WAR OVER THE LAST ENERGY RESERVES HAVE DEVASTATED LARGE PARTS OF EUROPE. A NEW WALL RUNS THROUGH GERMANY. ON ONE SIDE OF THE WALL, ONE OF THE LAST AFFLUENT SOCIETIES - ON THE OTHER, THE THIRD WORLD..

HERE IN THE WORLD OF THE POOR, THE SO-CALLED QUARANTINE ZONE, LIVE DODO AND NUKE. DODO, A FORMER LEFT-WING GUERRILLA FIGHTER, IS THE GUITARIST IN THE METAL BAND IWO JIMA GIRLS. ONE LAST BIG CONCERT IN THE QUARANTINE ZONE IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE BAND'S BREAKTHROUGH.

NUKE, A DESERTED WAR VETERAN, KEEPS HIS HEAD ABOVE WATER WITH ODD JOBS AND DROWNS THE FRUSTRATION OF HIS BLEAK LIFE IN THE QUARANTINE ZONE WITH TOO MUCH ALCOHOL.

THIS IS THE CHRONOLOGICAL BEGINNING OF THE SAGA OF DODO AND NUKE.

THE STORIES "THE LAST GIG" AND "CROSSFIRE 1 AND 2" CONTAINED IN THIS ANTHOLOGY WERE FIRST PUBLISHED IN 2011 AND 2013 AND HAVE BEEN THOROUGHLY REVISED.



THENEXTART

HADES-SYNDROME - THE LAST GIG

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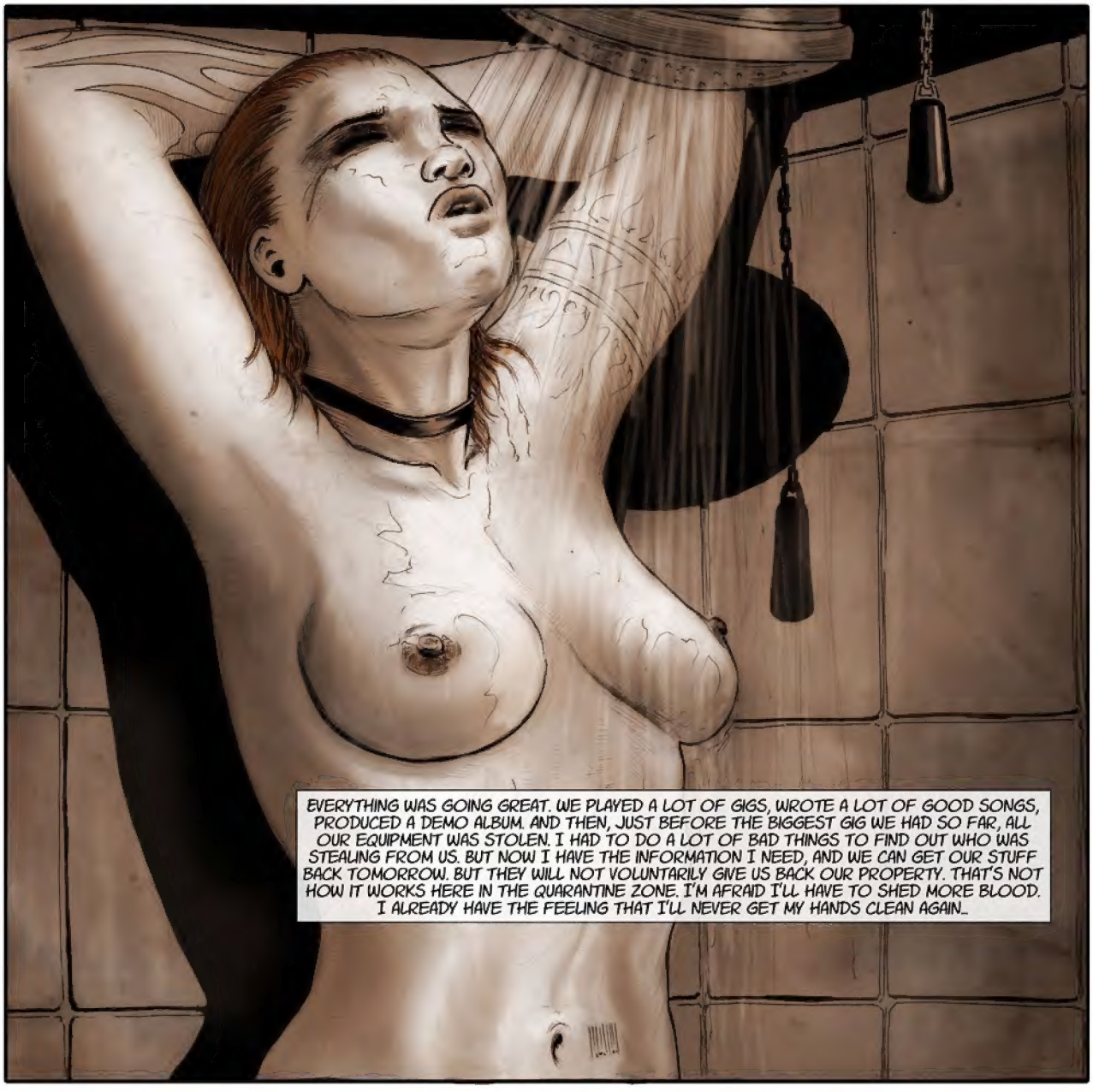
A FEW YEARS AFTER THE END OF CIVILIZATION...
...SOMEWHERE IN THE QUARANTINE ZONE...

HI, I AM DODO. NO IDEA HOW YOU GOT IN HERE. BUT IF YOU HAVE TO VIOLATE MY PRIVACY, YOU CAN LISTEN TO ME FOR A WHILE. I HAVE SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT, WHILE I WASH DOWN THE DIRT OF THE GUTTER...
...I HAVE NEVER KNOWN A LIFE WITHOUT VIOLENCE. MY EARLIEST MEMORY IS THAT MY MOTHER WAS MURDERED. AFTER THAT, I WAS PUT IN A CHILDREN HOME WHERE I WAS BEATEN BY THE NUNS EVERY DAY UNTIL I WAS BIG ENOUGH TO FIGHT BACK...
...MEANWHILE, PEOPLE WITH MORE POWER THAN SENSE BOMBED THE WORLD BACK TO THE STONE AGE. I'M NOT INTERESTED IN POLITICS AND STUFF LIKE THAT, SO YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK SOMEONE ELSE WHO WAS FIGHTING AGAINST WHOM AND WHY...
...I WAS KICKED OUT OF THE ORPHANAGE AFTER BREAKING THE ARMS OF THE HEAD NUN. THE DARK YEARS AFTER THE BIG BANG I SPENT THEREFORE IN THE SUBWAY SHAFTS OF SOME EXTINGUISHED CITY...
ENTER THE HADES
...EVERYTHING THAT HAD NOT BEEN DESTROYED FELL INTO THE HANDS OF THE EXTREMISTS. AFTER THE WITCH TRIALS THE FUNERAL PYRES BURNED IN AMERICA. HERE, THE BROWN MOB MADE THE STREETS UNSAFE...

...I WAS LIVING ON THE SURFACE AGAIN AND HANGING OUT WITH A BUNCH OF PUNKS. WHEN WE WEREN'T FLEEING FROM THE FASCISTS, I TAUGHT MYSELF SOME FINGERINGS ON AN OLD GUITAR...
...MY POLITICAL DISINTEREST ENDED WITH THE FOUNDING OF THE FOURTH REICH...
...SO I GAVE UP MY MUSICAL AMBITIONS FOR THE TIME BEING AND JOINED A LEFTIST GUERRILLA. WE WENT TO WAR AGAINST THE NAZIS... AND WON...
AFTER THE GREAT AND SMALL WARS FINALLY ENDED, NOTHING REMAINED BUT ANARCHY. THE REMNANTS OF STATE POWER AND CIVILIZATION RETREATED BEHIND A TEN-METER-HIGH WALL. AROUND THIS WALLED AREA IS THE SO-CALLED QUARANTINE ZONE. THIS IS WHERE I LIVE NOW...

PLAYING GUITAR IS THE ONLY THING I KNOW HOW TO DO BESIDES GUERRILLA WARFARE. SO I FORMED A METAL BAND CALLED IWO JIMA GIRLS WITH SOME OTHER RIOT GRRRLS...


EVERYTHING WAS GOING GREAT. WE PLAYED A LOT OF GIGS, WROTE A LOT OF GOOD SONGS, PRODUCED A DEMO ALBUM. AND THEN, JUST BEFORE THE BIGGEST GIG WE HAD SO FAR, ALL OUR EQUIPMENT WAS STOLEN. I HAD TO DO A LOT OF BAD THINGS TO FIND OUT WHO WAS STEALING FROM US. BUT NOW I HAVE THE INFORMATION I NEED, AND WE CAN GET OUR STUFF BACK TOMORROW. BUT THEY WILL NOT VOLUNTARILY GIVE US BACK OUR PROPERTY. THAT'S NOT HOW IT WORKS HERE IN THE QUARANTINE ZONE. I'M AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO SHED MORE BLOOD. I ALREADY HAVE THE FEELING THAT I'LL NEVER GET MY HANDS CLEAN AGAIN...

PRELUDE..
WIDOW HAS BEEN INSIDE ON RECONNAISSANCE MISSION FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES NOW. EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE CLEAR. THE SHOW'S ABOUT TO START. STAY CLOSE TO THE CAR IN CASE WE NEED TO LEAVE QUICKLY.
NO SMOKING!
I TRIED TO STEAL HERE. I SHOULD HAVE LEFT IT ALONE!
HEY, I NEED TO PEE URGENTLY, CAN I USE YOUR TOILET?
FOR STAFF ONLY. UNLESS.. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WEARING YOUR PANTIES?
THREE DAYS I THINK.
SOUNDS PROMISING.

DO ANY OF YOU GUYS HAVE A LIGHT?
DO YOU HEAR BAD?!? NO SMOKING HE..
I'LL KILL YOU FOR THIS!
IT BLEEDS MY HEART TO HAVE TO DO THIS NOW.
CHEESES

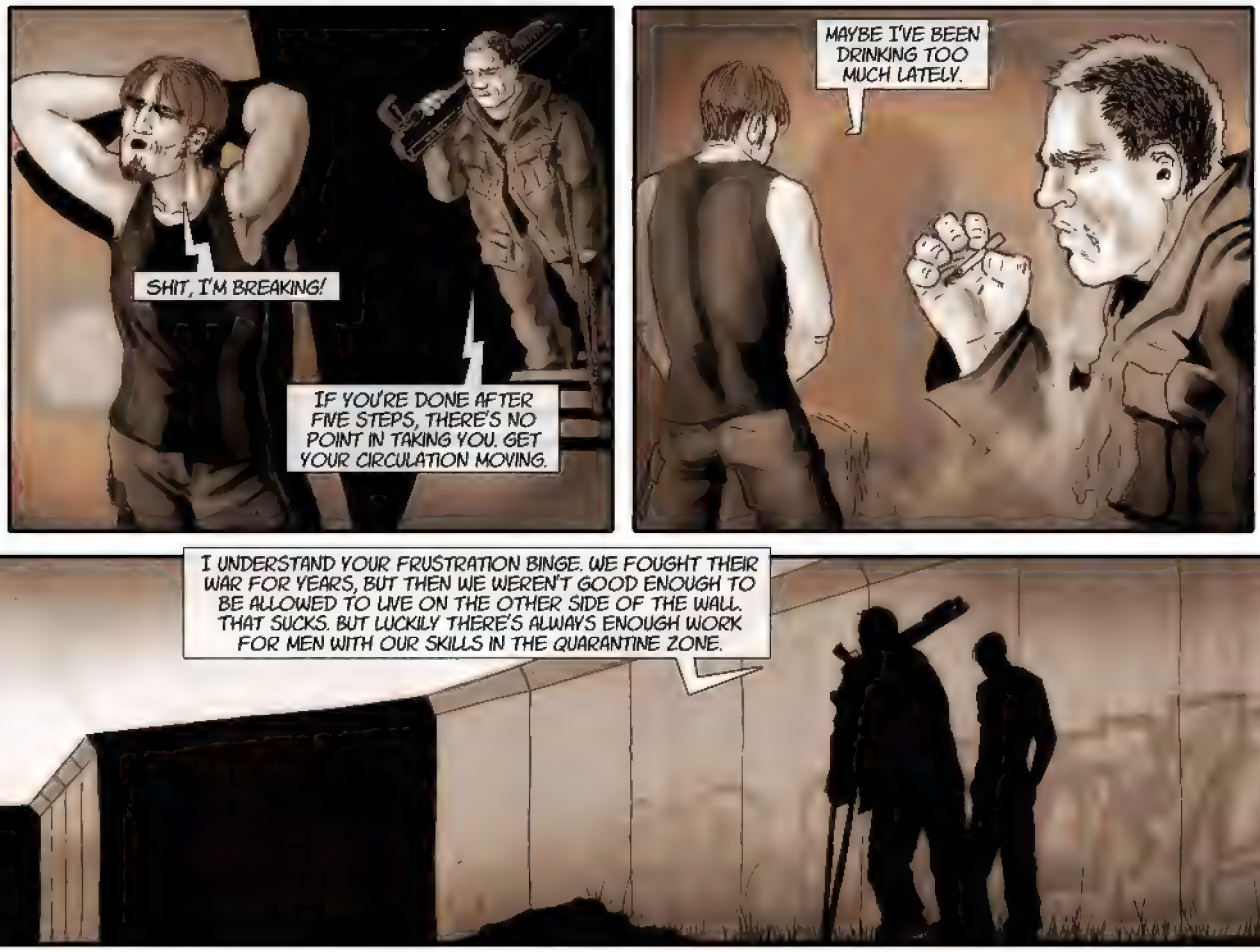
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE!!! YOU MONSTER!
YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE OUT OUR GEAR NOW. ONE FALSE MOVE, AND I'LL KILL YOU!
ARE YOU DEAF? LET'S GO!

YOU TOO, DUMB ASS. OUR AMPS DON'T CARRY THEMSELVES OUT ON THEIR OWN.
TAKE YOUR FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER, PLEASE, MON AMI.
IT WAS A PLEASURE DOING BUSINESS WITH YOU. - AH, YES.. YOUR SNIPER ACROSS THE STREET WILL NOT HELP YOU.
YOU FUCKING..
..BITCH!

WHY? WE DIDN'T WANT TO KILL ANYONE.
IF YOU HAD SEARCHED THE GUY FOR WEAPONS, I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN NECESSARY.
HEY, LADIES! IF THAT WASN'T A SUCCESSFUL COUP!
THAT'S RIGHT. WE HAVE OUR EQUIPMENT BACK AND TWO CANISTERS OF FUEL ON TOP OF IT.
WOO-HOO!!!

WHILE WE WERE CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESS WITH A MORNING BENDER, THE FOLLOWING HAPPENED NEARBY...
GOOD MORNING.
IF YOU WANT SOMETHING TO DRINK, STRANGER, I CAN ONLY SERVE WITH THE PUDDLES ON THE GROUND.
TOO BAD. DO YOU KNOW HIM? GOES BY THE NAME OF NUKE.
WANTED
HM. .. LOOKS LIKE THE GUY I HIRED AS A BOUNCER. YESTERDAY HE DRANK UP MY ENTIRE STOCK, THEN BEAT UP TWENTY REGULARS AND RAN OFF WITH MY OLD LADY. .. YOU COULD HAVE SHOWN UP HERE WITH THE PROFILE A DAY EARLIER!

GET THIS THING OFF MY NOSE!
MAKE IT SHORT SO THE MISERY ENDS.
I'M NOT THAT NICE
SKUNK?!? THAT YOU OF ALL PEOPLE WOULD KILL ME.
NO SHOOTING IN MY HOUSE! IF YOU WANT TO KILL YOURSELVES, DO IT OUTSIDE!
I'M NOT GONNA KILL YOU. I NEED YOU FOR A JOB.
OH, BLONDIE. FIRST THE INNKEEPER OFFERED ME MONEY TO KILL YOU. THEN HE STARTED CRYING AND BEGGING YOU TO COME BACK TO HIM.
OH, MAN. I REALLY THOUGHT I WAS FINISHED.
THAT'S OKAY. NOW STEP BACK AND PUT ON SOME PANTS.


SHIT, I'M BREAKING!
IF YOU'RE DONE AFTER FIVE STEPS, THERE'S NO POINT IN TAKING YOU. GET YOUR CIRCULATION MOVING.
MAYBE I'VE BEEN DRINKING TOO MUCH LATELY.
I UNDERSTAND YOUR FRUSTRATION BINGE. WE FOUGHT THEIR WAR FOR YEARS, BUT THEN WE WEREN'T GOOD ENOUGH TO BE ALLOWED TO LIVE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL. THAT SUCKS. BUT LUCKILY THERE'S ALWAYS ENOUGH WORK FOR MEN WITH OUR SKILLS IN THE QUARANTINE ZONE.
SINCE WHEN DO OUR OLD COMRADES PATROL THE ZONE AGAIN? IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I LAST SAW THE BORDER TROOPS.
FREEZE!
HOLY SHIT
GET OUTTA HERE! IT'S NONE OF OUR BUSINESS.

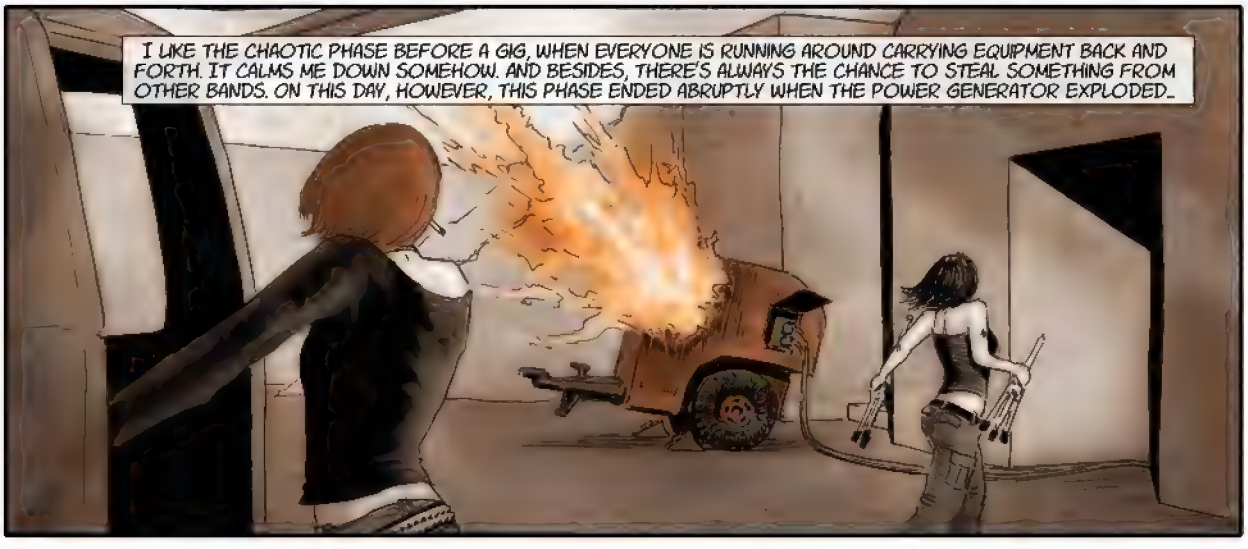
EASY, COMRADE! YOU DON´T WANNA SHOOT TWO OLD VETERANS!
PISS OFF!
WERE WE ACTUALLY SUCH KILLERS WHEN WE STILL WORE THE UNIFORM?
DUDE, DON'T YOU REMEMBER THE WATER CAMPAIGN? WE WERE WAY WORSE THAN THOSE KIDS!
AS THE STATE RETREATED BEHIND THE WALL, GANGS TOOK OVER THE QUARANTINE ZONE. THE MOST POWERFUL GANGS WERE THE ROUGH RIDERS AND THE DESPERADOS. BECAUSE IT WAS BETTER TO KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR ENEMIES, BOTH GANGS HAD SET UP THEIR HEADQUARTERS WITHIN SIGHT OF EACH OTHER IN TWO OLD BUNKERS.
SKUNK SAYS YOU GOT A JOB FOR ME.
YOUR BUDDY PROMISED ME A TOUGH WARRIOR. I DON'T THINK I'D HIRE A WRECK LIKE YOU.
THEN DON'T. IF I'M LUCKY, THE BABE FROM TONIGHT IS STILL IN BED WAITING FOR ME.
WHILE YOU'RE HERE... - WE'RE AT WAR WITH THE DESPERADOS. FOR THE MOMENT THERE'S A TRUCE. BUT IT WON'T LAST MUCH LONGER. SO WE NEED TO REPLENISH OUR WAR CHEST IN TIME.
THE DESPERADOS UP THERE ARE EARNING THEMSELVES SILLY WITH THEIR GLADIATOR FIGHTS. WE WILL COUNTER THIS WITH CONCERT EVENTS. IN ORDER NOT TO SCARE OFF NEUTRAL CIVILIANS, WE WILL OUTSOURCE THE SECURITY. SKUNK WILL LEAD THE TEAM. THE POSITION OF VICE PRESIDENT IS STILL VACANT.
DEAD

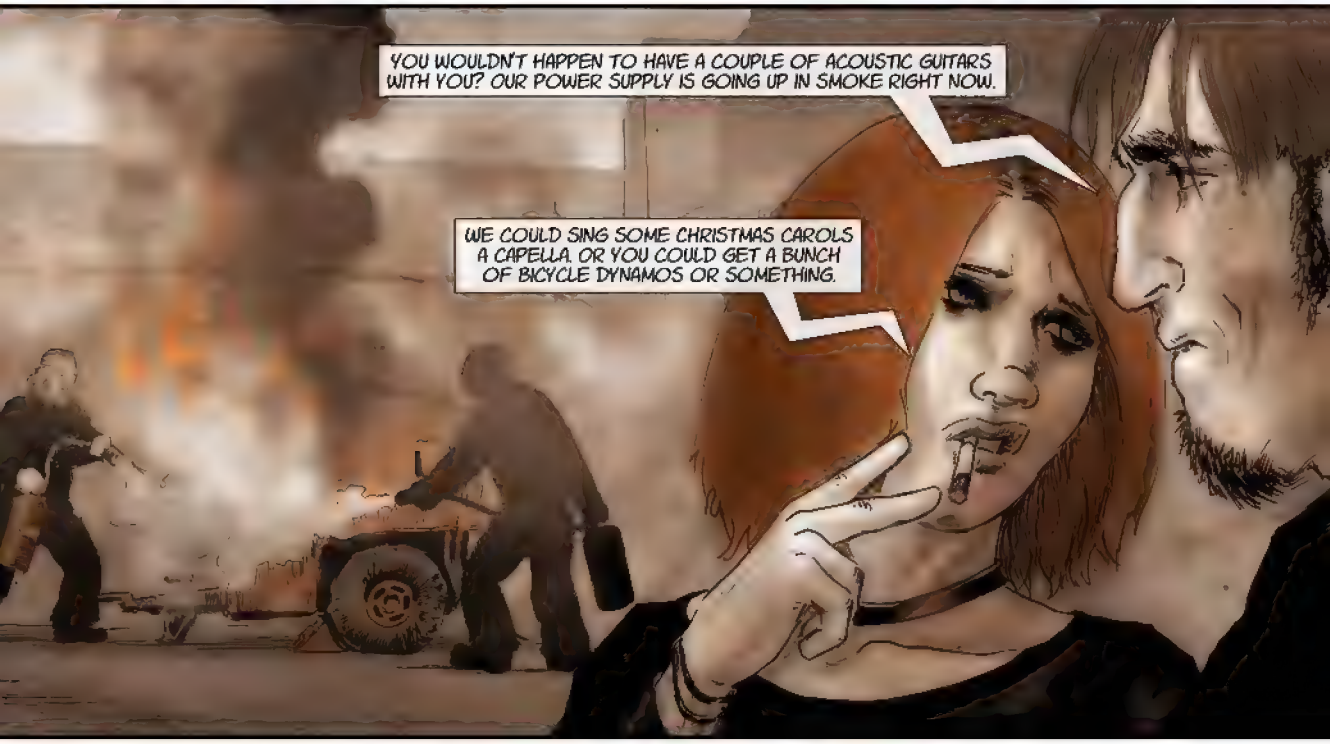
THAT'S ACTUALLY WHY WE CALLED YOU HERE.
BUT I CHANGED MY MIND. WE'LL COLLECT THE BOUNTY ON YOUR HEAD INSTEAD..
WANTED
IF YOU FAGS WANT TO DANCE Y.M.C.A. WITH ME, PLEASE. I JUST DON'T HAVE MY INDIAN FEATHERS WITH ME.
SHUT THAT COMEDIAN UP!
NOT BAD!
SO, DID I PROMISE YOU TOO MUCH?
OKAY, PASSED THE TEST. YOU HAVE THE JOB.

TWO WEEKS LATER THE DAY OF OUR BIG AND UNFORTUNATELY LAST GIG HAD FINALLY ARRIVED.
HI. WE ARE THE IWO JIMA GIRLS.
THE BAND IS HERE. PUT THE TRUCK BACK!
CLEAN. YOU CAN DRIVE IN.
IWO JIMA GIRLS

WE GOT ACQUAINTED WITH OUR HOSTS.. AND THEN HE STOOD IN FRONT OF ME..
IS THERE SUCH A THING AS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT? I HAVE NO IDEA. HOWEVER, IT WAS IMMEDIATELY CLEAR TO ME THAT BEHIND THIS MAN´S STOIC FACADE WAS A TRULY DANGEROUS KILLER WHO I WOULD FUCK RIGHT THEN AND THERE..

HEY, LOVEBIRDS! CAN'T YOU TAKE A CIGARETTE BREAK WHEN WE HAVE ALL OUR STUFF ON STAGE?

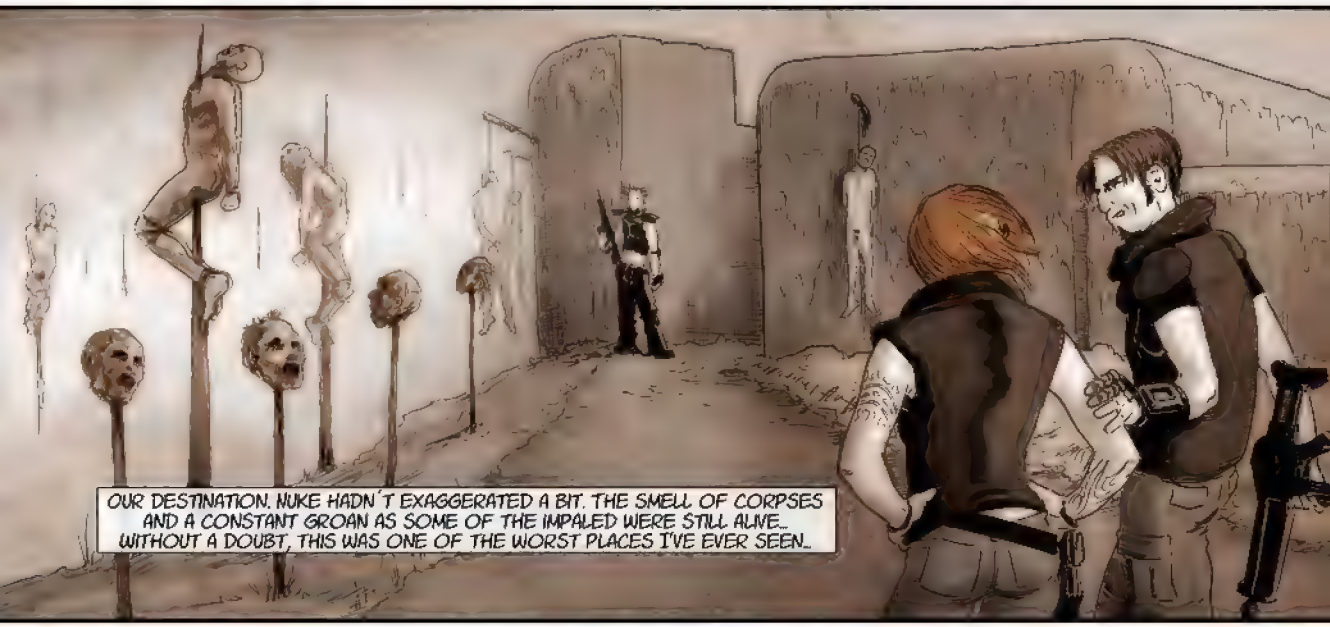

I LIKE THE CHAOTIC PHASE BEFORE A GIG, WHEN EVERYONE IS RUNNING AROUND CARRYING EQUIPMENT BACK AND FORTH. IT CALMS ME DOWN SOMEHOW. AND BESIDES, THERE'S ALWAYS THE CHANCE TO STEAL SOMETHING FROM OTHER BANDS. ON THIS DAY, HOWEVER, THIS PHASE ENDED ABRUPTLY WHEN THE POWER GENERATOR EXPLODED_


YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO HAVE A COUPLE OF ACOUSTIC GUITARS WITH YOU? OUR POWER SUPPLY IS GOING UP IN SMOKE RIGHT NOW.
WE COULD SING SOME CHRISTMAS CAROLS A CAPELLA. OR YOU COULD GET A BUNCH OF BICYCLE DYNAMOS OR SOMETHING.

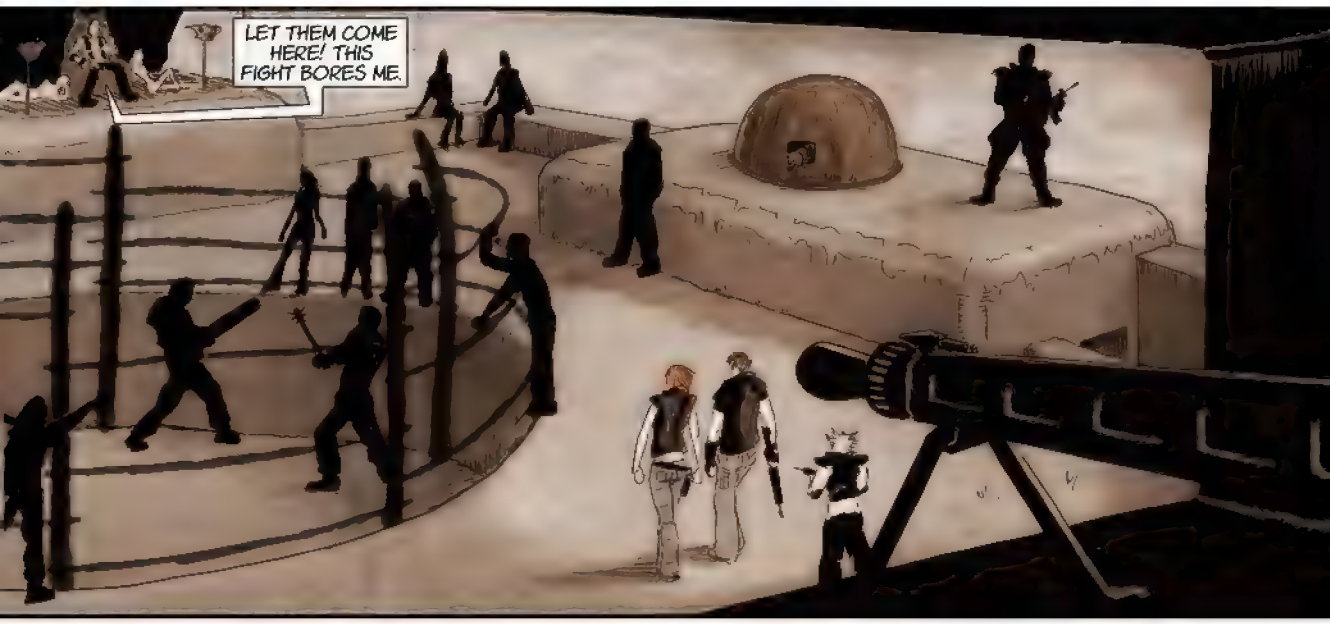
SABOTAGE! THE FUEL WAS CONTAMINATED.
I ENTRUSTED YOU WITH A LOT OF MONEY SO THAT YOU COULD GET US IMPECCABLE GASOLINE. AND YOU TOTALLY FUCKED IT UP.
THAT STUFF WAS CLEAN, I SWEAR, DUDE. NOT MY FAULT.
STOP WHIMPERING! I'LL COUNT TO TEN. IF YOU'RE STILL HERE, I'LL KILL YOU. ONE, TWO...
...TEN!
FEED HIM TO THE PIGS. CRISIS MEETING IN FIVE MINUTES.
I ALREADY HAVE THREE TIMES. WITHOUT THE BIG GENERATOR, WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH POWER FOR P.A. AND LIGHTS.
DO THE MATH AGAIN!
SO, DO YOU HAVE A SOLUTION TO THE ENERGY CRISIS?
MMM! - ONE MORE, PLEASE. - YEAH, THEY'VE GOT A GREAT IDEA THERE!

I SHOULD NEVER HAVE GOTTEN INVOLVED IN THIS JOB. THESE AMATEURS ARE GOOD AT PIMPING AND EXTORTING PROTECTION MONEY AND NOTHING ELSE. NOW THEY WANT TO SEND ME AS A NEGOTIATOR TO THOSE LUNATICS ON THE HILL, SO THAT THEY SUPPLY US WITH ELECTRICITY FOR TONIGHT.
IF YOU NEED HELP... I'M JUST BORED HERE AT THE MOMENT ANYWAY.
I HEARD ABOUT YOUR COUP. COOL ACTION. IN FACT, I'D HATE TO GO UP THERE ALONE. COME ON, HAVE A DRINK WITH ME!
THAT WENT DOWN LIKE OIL. (I MEAN THE PRAISE FROM NUKE. NOT THE HOMEBREW. THAT WAS PURE POISON).
THE DIRECT WAY IS MINED. SO WE HAVE TO GO AROUND THE WHOLE HILL. TAKES TWO HOURS. IT'S A BAD AREA. THAT'S WHY WE WEAR BULLETPROOF VESTS. IF ANYBODY GIVES YOU ANY SHIT... SHOOT FIRST, ASK QUESTIONS LATER!

WE SET OFF AND TALKED ALL THE TIME. NUKE TOLD ME HOW HE GOT HIS NICKNAME AND THAT HE IS ONE OF VERY FEW PEOPLE WHO SURVIVED RADIATION SICKNESS.
ALTHOUGH I HAD ONLY KNOWN THIS GUY FOR A SHORT TIME, I CONFIDED IN HIM ABOUT THE MOST PERSONAL THINGS. I TOLD HIM ABOUT THE DIRTY WAR WE HAD FOUGHT AGAINST THE NAZIS. AND ABOUT THE DEMONS THAT HAVE HAUNTED ME AT NIGHT EVER SINCE.
FINALLY, I SHOCKED NUKE WITH THE STORY OF HOW THE STATE GOT RID OF ALL PENSIONERS IN A LAST DITCH ATTEMPT TO DEAL WITH THE ENERGY CRISIS. WHILE NUKE WAS DEFENDING "FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY" ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD, AN UNPRECEDENTED MASS MURDER WAS TAKING PLACE IN THIS COUNTRY, KILLING ABOUT A THIRD OF THE POPULATION...
DIE B!


OUR DESTINATION. NUKE HADN´T EXAGGERATED A BIT. THE SMELL OF CORPSES AND A CONSTANT GROAN AS SOME OF THE IMPALED WERE STILL ALIVE... WITHOUT A DOUBT, THIS WAS ONE OF THE WORST PLACES I'VE EVER SEEN...

O MOST SERENE ONE! TWO NEG..
A-A-A! TAKE YOUR FINGERS OFF MY THRONE, UNWORTHY ONE!
OF COURSE, LORD AND MASTER! TWO NEGOTIATORS FROM THE ROUGH RIDERS WANT TO TALK TO YOU.

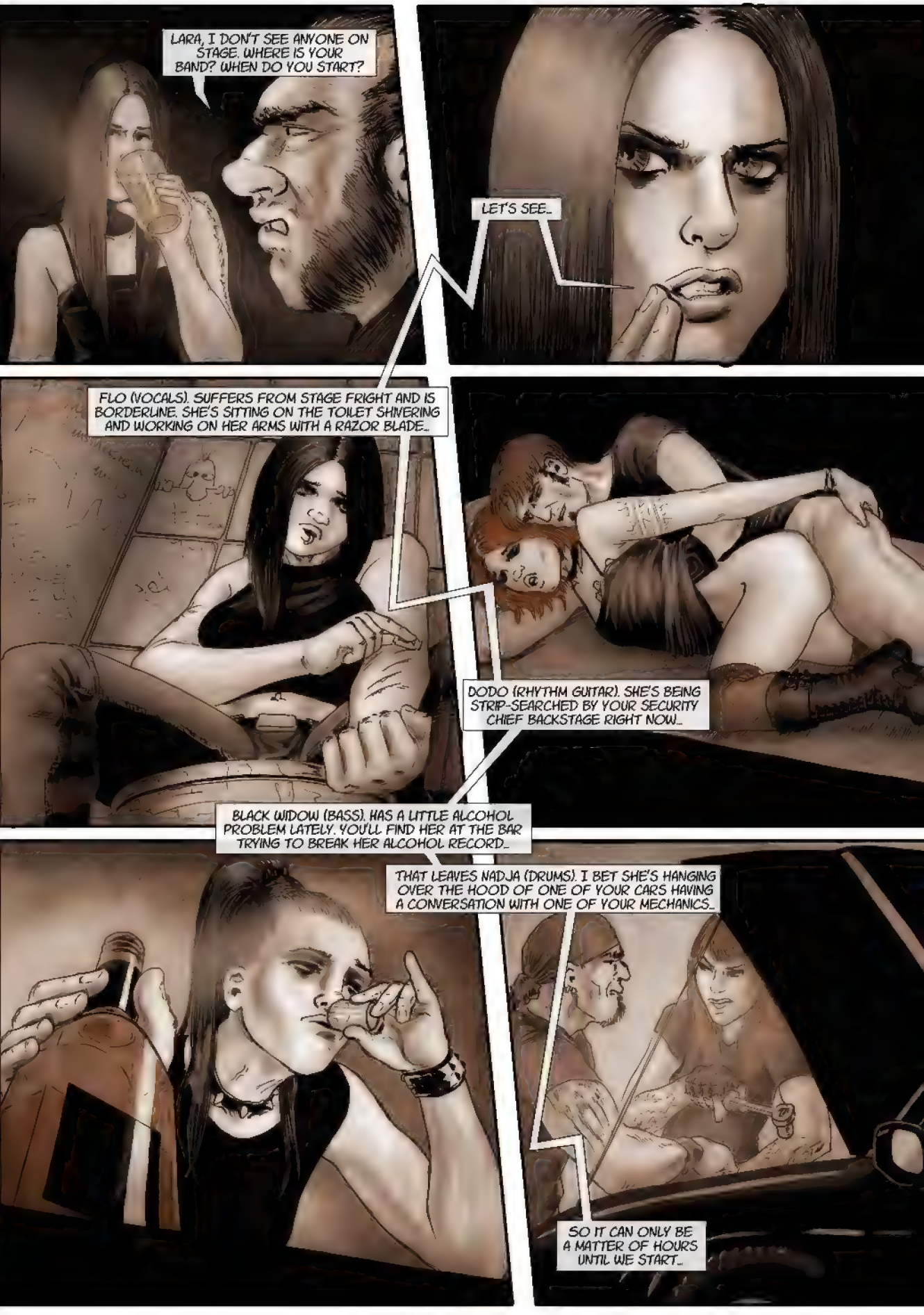

LET THEM COME HERE! THIS FIGHT BORES ME.

KILL HIM!
KILL HIM!
IT HAS TO LOOK AT THAT. THE INTERESTING PART OF THE FIGHT BEGINS.
KNEEL BEFORE YOUR HIGHNESS!
EATEN A CLOWN FOR BREAKFAST, EH?

THE LEADER OF THE DESPERADOS. RARELY HAVE I BEEN SO DISGUSTED BY A HUMAN BEING..
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?
A LITTLE LATER WE CAME TO AN AGREEMENT. THE DESPERADOS AGREED TO SUPPLY THE ELECTRICITY FOR OUR GIG. IN RETURN, THE ROUGH RIDERS WOULD CEDE 25 PERCENT OF THEIR TERRITORY. THEN WE MADE OUR WAY BACK..
I'M TOTALLY HORNY AFTER A FIGHT. COME ON, I WANT TO FU..
BACK WITH THE ROUGH RIDERS..
..SHE KNOCKS OUT THIS TOUGH GLADIATOR WITH A SINGLE BLOW. GREAT WOMAN! I THINK I'M IN LOVE, MY FRIEND.
COMPLETELY IRRESPONSIBLE! FIGHTS ALWAYS AFTER A GIG! IMAGINE, YOU WOULD HAVE BROKEN YOUR HAND. NOW YOU'RE FINALLY WARMING UP!
YES, MOMMY!

THERE WAS A SUPPLY TUNNELBETWEEN THE TWO BUNKERS THAT HAD BEEN FILLED IN. IT WAS CONSIDERED EASIER TO RE-OPEN THIS TUNNEL AND LAY A POWER CABLE THROUGH IT THAN TO RUN ABOVE GROUND THROUGH THE MINEFIELD.
ADMISSION SHOULD HAVE BEGUN AN HOUR AGO. THE CROWD IS GETTING RESTLESS.
IT JUST TAKES TIME TO UNCOVER THE TUNNEL AGAIN.
I'M THROUGH. SIGNAL THE DESPERADOS THAT THEY CAN SEND THE CABLE OVER.
INSTEAD OF BREAD AND SALT, YOU GET AN ELECTRIC CABLE. HAVE FUN WITH IT. IN FIVE HOURS, WE'LL CUT THE LINE.
GO DOWN THERE AND DEFEND THIS ENTRANCE TO THE LAST BULLET IN CASE THE DESPERADOS ATTACK US!
OKAY. POWER SUPPLY IS SET UP AND RUNNING.
AWESOME DRESS. BY THE WAY WE'RE LETTING PEOPLE IN NOW. YOUR SUPPORT ACT IS ABOUT TO START.

THANKS FOR THE BEER.
IT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO FOR YOU. WOULD HAVE PISSED MY PANTS IN FEAR UP THERE ALONE.
DON'T MAKE FUN OF ME AND KISS ME ALREADY!
WOOHOO. DODO GETS DOWN TO BUSINESS PRETTY QUICKLY.
FINE BY ME. I HAVE TO GO TO THE LOO AGAIN.
TAGE


LARA, I DON'T SEE ANYONE ON STAGE. WHERE IS YOUR BAND? WHEN DO YOU START?
LET'S SEE..
FLO (VOCALS). SUFFERS FROM STAGE FRIGHT AND IS BORDERLINE. SHE'S SITTING ON THE TOILET SHIVERING AND WORKING ON HER ARMS WITH A RAZOR BLADE..
DODO (RHYTHM GUITAR). SHE'S BEING STRIP-SEARCHED BY YOUR SECURITY CHIEF BACKSTAGE RIGHT NOW..
BLACK WIDOW (BASS). HAS A LITTLE ALCOHOL PROBLEM LATELY. YOU'LL FIND HER AT THE BAR TRYING TO BREAK HER ALCOHOL RECORD..
THAT LEAVES NADJA (DRUMS). I BET SHE'S HANGING OVER THE HOOD OF ONE OF YOUR CARS HAVING A CONVERSATION WITH ONE OF YOUR MECHANICS..
SO IT CAN ONLY BE A MATTER OF HOURS UNTIL WE START..

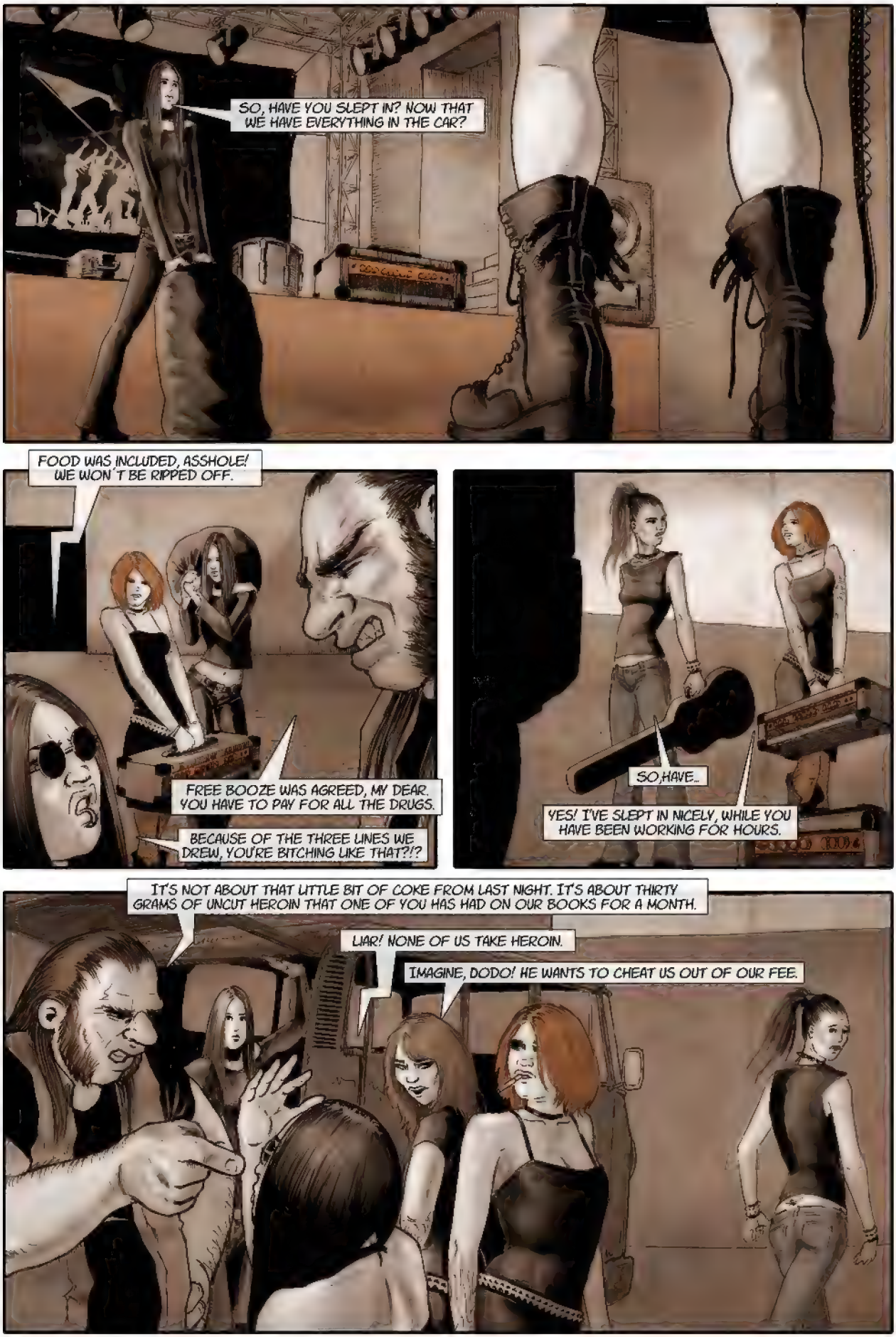
WITH A LITTLE DELAY THE BAND HAD FINALLY ARRIVED IN THE BACKSTAGE AREA..
LET'S RO..
..OOOCK!!!
GREAT TO PLAY WITH SUCH REAL PROFESSIONALS.
DRINK THE COFFEE!
SSSIR, YES, SSSIR!!!
IWO JIMA GIRLS
SPECIAL GUEST
STAGE
COME ON!
NOW PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!
"TOTAL DILETTANTES - BUT THE GIRLS ROCK LIKE HELL!" IS HOW A CRITIC ONCE DESCRIBED US. AND THAT'S EXACTLY HOW OUR LAST GIG WENT. WE PLAYED WRONG, BUT MADE THE AUDIENCE GO WILD. THAT WAS THE BEST DAY OF MY LIFE.

CHAPTER 2

AFTERSHOW PARTY..
SO, ARE THE PHOTOS ANY GOOD?
SURE. I CAN´T HEAR YOU PLAY ON IT. - IT'S ABOUT TIME, GIVE ME THE SWILL!!!
YOU HAVE A BIG MOUTH. BUT CAN YOU ANSWER THAT TOO? I CARRIED A WATERMELON.
THAT'S EASY. FERRIS BUELLER´S DAY OFF.
WRONG. JENNIFER GREY ALSO STARRED IN FERRIS, BUT THE ANSWER IS DIRTY DANCING.
FIERCE. THAT'S NOT A MOON. THAT'S A SPACE STATION.
STAR WARS - EPISODE IV.
COME ON, NUKE. THIS DRINKING GAME IS JUST A BIT ANNOYING.
JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT MOVIES.

CHEERS, FOLKS.
DON'T WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING? SHE CAN'T JUST LIE THERE LIKE THAT.
DON'T WORRY. WIDOW ALWAYS DOES SO. SHE WAKES UP IN AN HOUR AND CONTINUES DRINKING UNTIL NOON TOMORROW.
BUT SHE ALWAYS GETS IN LINE TOO. SHE DIDN'T EVEN CATCH THE GLASS WITH THE TOE IN IT.

THE MORNING AFTER...
SLEEP TIGHT, LOVERBOY.
DAMN! MY HEAD.


SO, HAVE YOU SLEPT IN? NOW THAT WE HAVE EVERYTHING IN THE CAR?
FOOD WAS INCLUDED, ASSHOLE! WE WON´T BE RIPPED OFF.
FREE BOOZE WAS AGREED, MY DEAR. YOU HAVE TO PAY FOR ALL THE DRUGS.
BECAUSE OF THE THREE LINES WE DREW, YOU'RE BITCHING LIKE THAT?!?
SO,HAVE...
YES! I'VE SLEPT IN NICELY, WHILE YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR HOURS.
IT'S NOT ABOUT THAT LITTLE BIT OF COKE FROM LAST NIGHT. IT'S ABOUT THIRTY GRAMS OF UNCUT HEROIN THAT ONE OF YOU HAS HAD ON OUR BOOKS FOR A MONTH.
LIAR! NONE OF US TAKE HEROIN.
IMAGINE, DODO! HE WANTS TO CHEAT US OUT OF OUR FEE.

OUR DRUG COMMISSIONER IS ON HIS WAY. THEN WE WILL SEE WHO IS LYING...
WHY THE SHOUTING SO EARLY IN THE MORNING?
SUDDENLY, AN INFERNO BROKE OUT AROUND US. EXPLOSIONS AND AUTOMATIC FIRE FROM ALL DIRECTIONS.
AAARGH!
OUTTA THE LINE OF FIRE!

HOW IS LARA?
NO ARTERY INJURED. APPEARS TO BE A STRAIGHT SHOT THROUGH.
WHERE´S WIDOW ANYWAY?
SHE MUST STILL BE INSIDE. COVER ME! I'LL GO AND GET HER. IF WE'RE NOT BACK IN FIVE MINUTES, YOU'RE GONE.
I AM NOT VERY SMART. THAT'S WHY I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANY GREAT WISDOM ALONG THE WAY. EXCEPT MAYBE THIS: IF YOU GO TO A SHOOT-OUT, TIE YOUR SHOES BEFORE..

SHIT!

HUH?!?

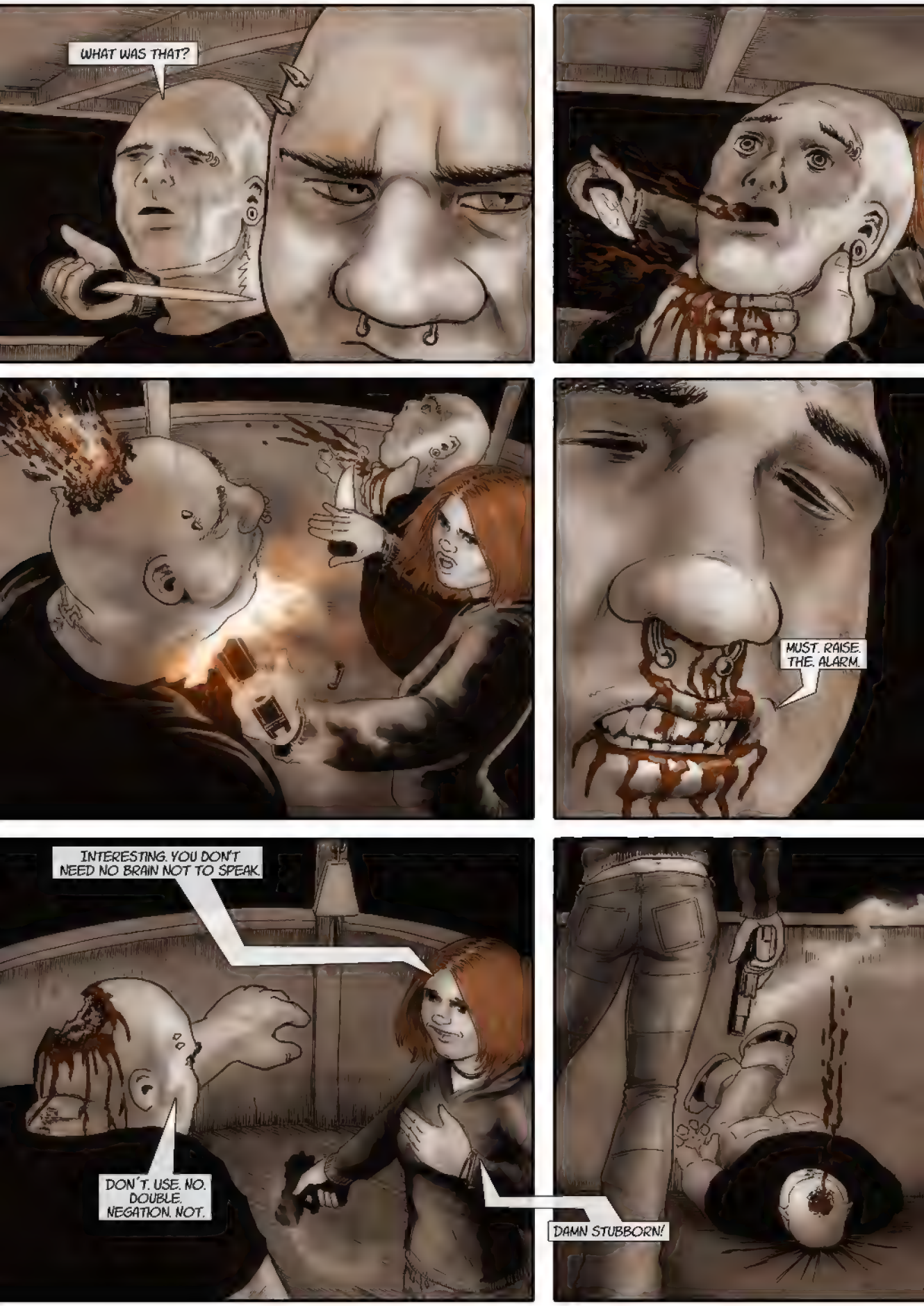
I'M AFRAID THAT MAY HURT A BIT NOW...

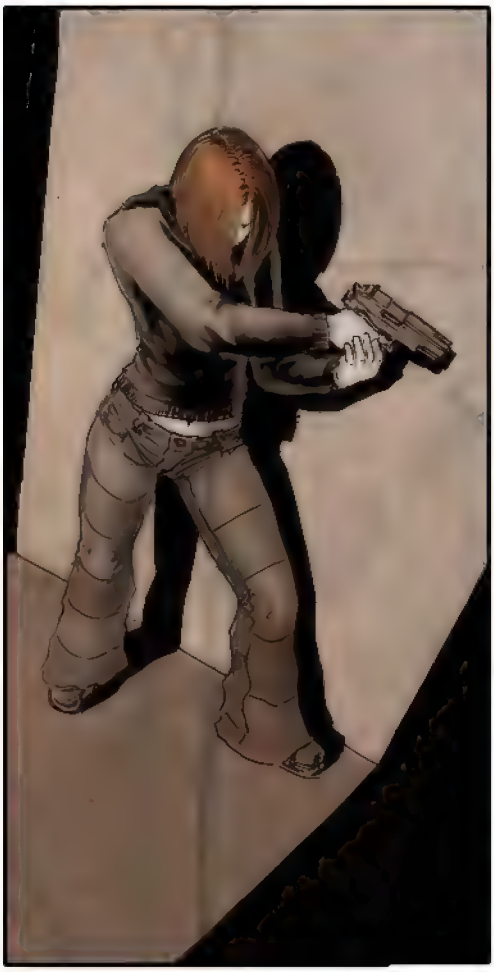
YOU OKAY, BABY?
YOU SAVED MY LIFE, MY HERO! BUT WHAT MONSTROUS POWER DO YOU HAVE?!?

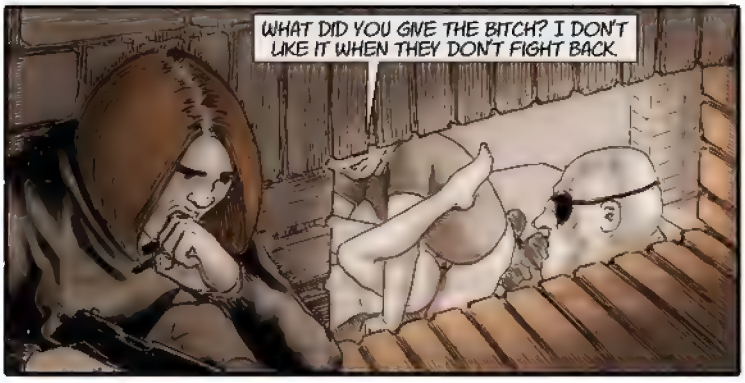
DON'T SHOOT! IT'S ME.
DUDE, WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
DESPERADOES HAVE COME THROUGH THE TUNNEL. WE'VE LOST. IF WE DON'T GET OUTTA HERE RIGHT NOW, WE'LL DIE HERE.
SHIT, WHAT LOSERS WE ARE. WE WON'T GET A JOB IN THE SECURITY INDUSTRY ANY TIME SOON. DODO, COME WITH ME!
WE CAN'T LET WIDOW DOWN!
THE LONG BLACK-HAIRED ONE? YOU CAN'T HELP HER ANYMORE. SHE WAS DRAGGED AWAY BY TWO DESPERADOS.
I HAVE TO GET SKUNK OUT OF HERE, BUT I CAN'T DO IT ALONE. IF YOU HELP ME, I'LL COME BACK WITH YOU, AND WE'LL SAVE YOUR FRIEND.
PROMISE?
THE BATTLE WAS NEARING ITS END. THE SURPRISED ROUGH RIDERS WERE CUT DOWN TO THE LAST MAN. BUT WE MADE IT BACK TO THE FORCOURT OF THE FORTRESS UNSCATHED. THE GATE WAS OPEN, THE TOUR BUS HAD DISAPPEARED. THE REST OF THE BAND HAD NOT WAITED...
NOTHING SPECIAL THAT CONCERTS IN THE QUARANTINE ZONE END IN MURDER AND MANSLAUGHTER. THAT'S WHY WE ALWAYS SET A MEETING POINT BEFORE A GIG, IN CASE ONE OF US GETS LOST. BUT AGAIN WE ONLY SAW THE TAIL LIGHTS DISAPPEARING INTO THE DISTANCE...
"COULDN'T WAIT ANY LONGER. NEW MEETING PLACE TOMORROW." GREAT FRIENDS YOU HAVE. AT LEAST THEY LEFT YOU YOUR STUFF.

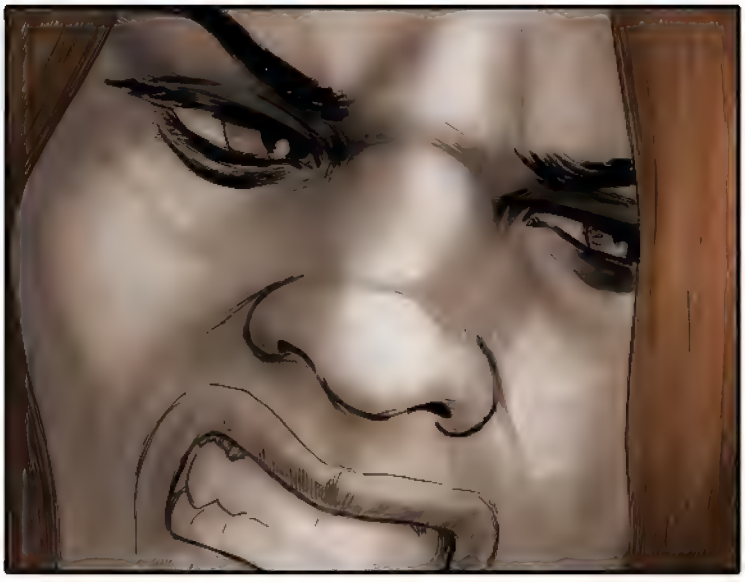
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. THEY JUST LEFT US DOWN.
THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING. I THOUGHT YOUR FRIENDS WERE TAKING SKUNK TO A DOCTOR. NOW I HAVE TO WALK HIM OUT. I CAN'T HELP YOU. AT LEAST NOT RIGHT AWAY.
BUT YOU PROMISED ME.
DODO, PLEASE! UNDERSTAND THAT.
FUCK OFF ASSHOLE!
LEAVE ME ALONE, ALL OF YOU!
DAMN IT!
YOU SAID IT.

AFTER DARK I BEGAN THE RESCUE OPERATION ALONE. THE DESPERADOES HAD ONLY OCCUPIED ONE WATCHTOWER AFTER THEIR GREAT VICTORY. THEY OBVIOUSLY FELT A LITTLE TOO SAFE NOW.
UNFORTUNATELY, THE SAME APPLIED TO ME..


WHAT WAS THAT?
MUST. RAISE. THE. ALARM.
INTERESTING. YOU DON'T NEED NO BRAIN NOT TO SPEAK.
DON´T. USE. NO. DOUBLE. NEGATION. NOT.
DAMN STUBBORN!




WHAT DID YOU GIVE THE BITCH? I DON'T LIKE IT WHEN THEY DON'T FIGHT BACK.

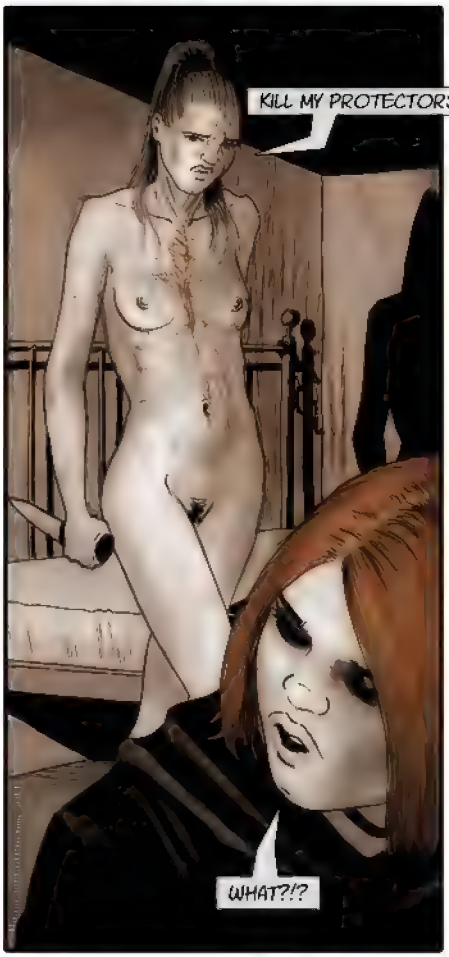


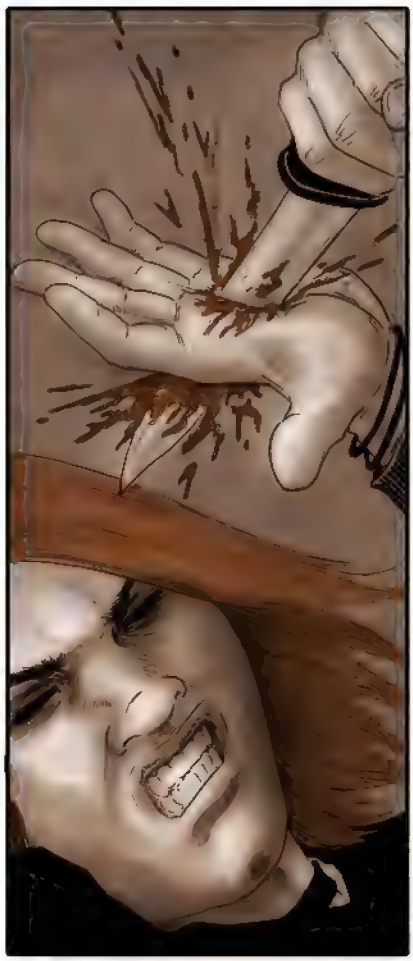
GET FINISHED! I WANNA HAVE A GO, TOO.
GET OFF HER!
OH LITTLE ONE, WHAT HAVE THE PIGS DONE TO YOU?
DODO? WHA´ ARE U DOIN HERE?

TAKE THE KNIFE. WHERE ARE YOUR CLOTHES? I DON'T WANT TO TAKE YOU OUT OF HERE NAKED.
HUH?

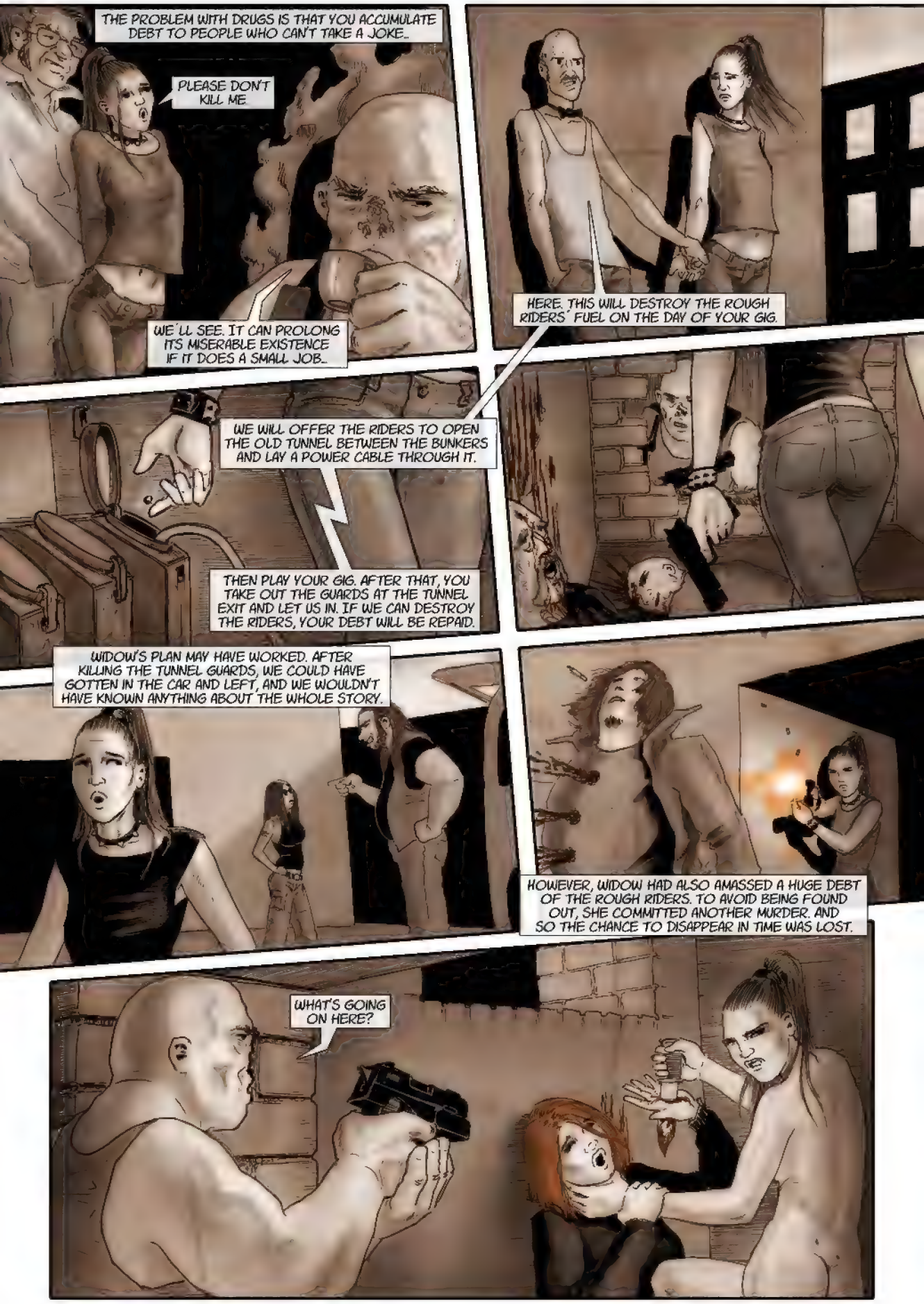
AH. GOT THEM.
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT.

WHAT?


KILL MY PROTECTORS.
WHAT?!?



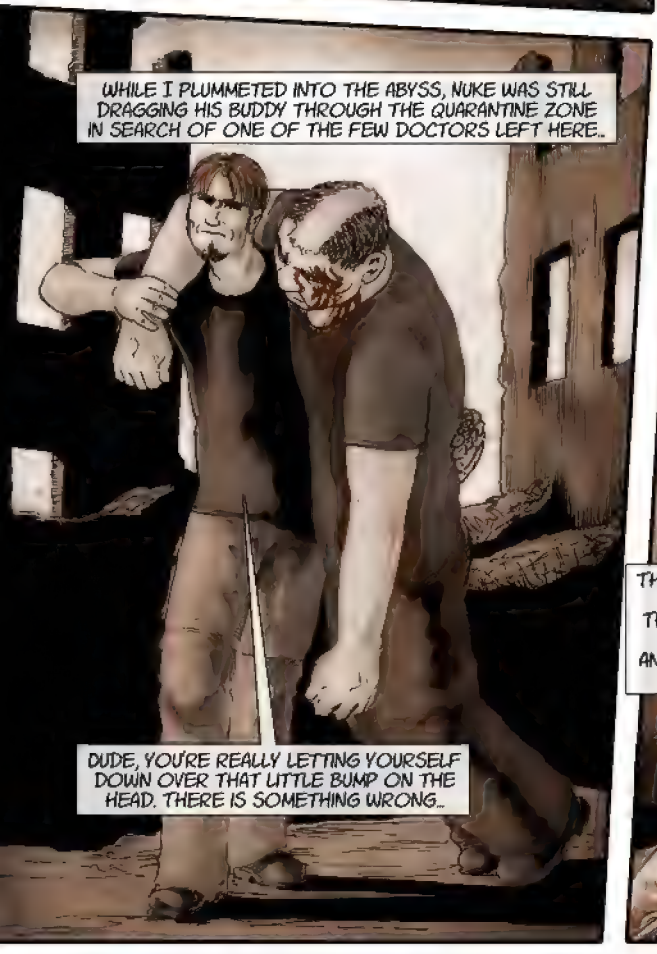
WHY?
WHY? WHY?!? ARE YOU REALLY THAT STUPID?!?
AND THEN SUDDENLY EVERYTHING BECAME CLEAR TO ME..
A FEW MONTHS EARLIER..
YOU'RE LEAVING ALREADY? I WANTED..
LISTEN, WIDOW. LAST NIGHT WAS A MISTAKE. I WAS TOTALLY DRUNK. IT WAS VERY NICE.. BUT I'M STRAIGHT.
LET'S NOT MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT, OKAY? SEE YOU IN THE REHEARSAL ROOM.
SURE.
SEEMS LIKE OUR BASS PLAYER'S HEARTBROKEN. NEVER MIND. LET'S SPRAY A FEW MORE WALLS.
IWO JIMA GIRLS
DONE. .. DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON WITH WIDOW? SHE'S BEEN CRYING FOR DAYS.
IS WIDOW IN THE TOILET AGAIN? WE'RE WASTING WAY TOO MUCH TIME.
COULD I HAVE FORESEEN THAT? THAT I'D BREAK A YOUNG GIRL'S HEART WITH A ONE-NIGHT STAND? MAYBE I COULD HAVE. BUT THAT WIDOW STARTS TAKING HEROIN RIGHT AWAY..
(BY THE WAY, WE NEVER SAW ANY PUNCTURES ON WIDOW'S ARMS. SO SHE MUST HAVE SET HER NEEDLES DIFFERENTLY. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE GUY WHO DRAWS THIS IS THINKING).

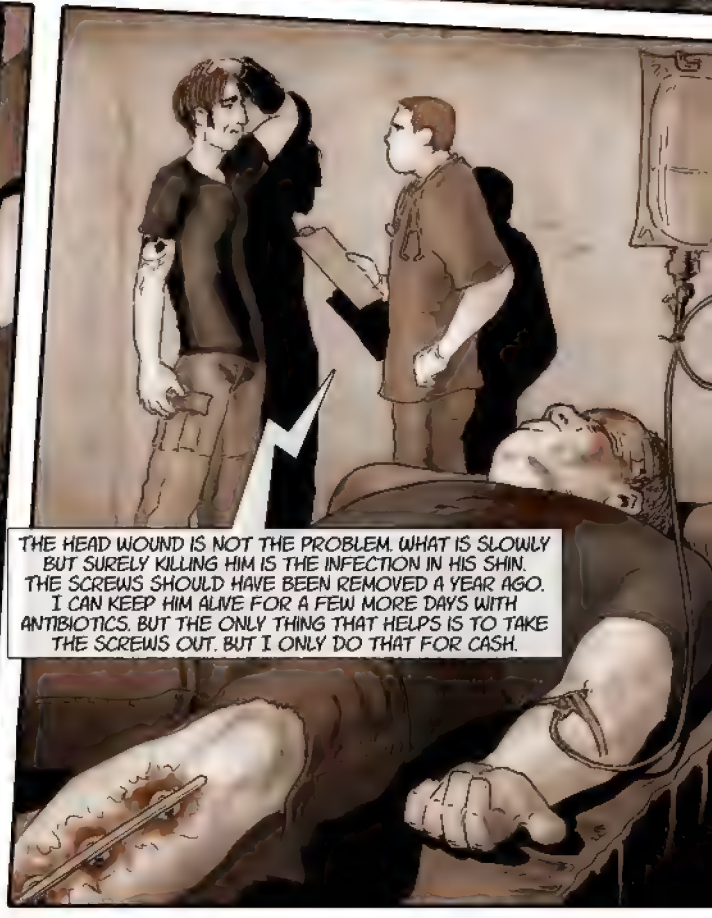

THE PROBLEM WITH DRUGS IS THAT YOU ACCUMULATE DEBT TO PEOPLE WHO CAN'T TAKE A JOKE..
PLEASE DON'T KILL ME.
WE'LL SEE. IT CAN PROLONG ITS MISERABLE EXISTENCE IF IT DOES A SMALL JOB..
HERE. THIS WILL DESTROY THE ROUGH RIDERS' FUEL ON THE DAY OF YOUR GIG.
WE WILL OFFER THE RIDERS TO OPEN THE OLD TUNNEL BETWEEN THE BUNKERS AND LAY A POWER CABLE THROUGH IT.
THEN PLAY YOUR GIG. AFTER THAT, YOU TAKE OUT THE GUARDS AT THE TUNNEL EXIT AND LET US IN. IF WE CAN DESTROY THE RIDERS, YOUR DEBT WILL BE REPAID.
WIDOW'S PLAN MAY HAVE WORKED. AFTER KILLING THE TUNNEL GUARDS, WE COULD HAVE GOTTEN IN THE CAR AND LEFT, AND WE WOULDN'T HAVE KNOWN ANYTHING ABOUT THE WHOLE STORY.
HOWEVER, WIDOW HAD ALSO AMASSED A HUGE DEBT OF THE ROUGH RIDERS. TO AVOID BEING FOUND OUT, SHE COMMITTED ANOTHER MURDER. AND SO THE CHANCE TO DISAPPEAR IN TIME WAS LOST.
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

GET RID OF THE BLACK-HAIRED ONE. EITHER IT FINDS A NEW PROTECTOR OR IT´LL BE STAKED TOMORROW. CAN WE DO SOMETHING WITH THE REDHEAD?
I THINK SO. BUT LET'S MAKE HER A LITTLE MORE COMPLIANT TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE.
CAN'T WORK LIKE THIS. HOLD HER REALLY TIGHT!
RELAX! AND IN RETURN FOR THE KICK I WANT A BLOW JOB.
SORRY, I DON'T HAVE A COCK FOR YOU TO PUT IN YOUR MOUTH.
YOU THINK YOU'RE FUNNIER THAN YOU ARE. WE'LL TAKE THE FUN OUT OF IT FOR YOU.

I WILL NEVER SUBMIT.
YEAH? LET'S SEE. I'VE BROKEN EVERY ONE IN THIS ROOM SO FAR. AND I DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING FOR IT EXCEPT LEAVE A SYRINGE HERE.
FINE BY ME. I DON'T NEED YOUR SYRINGE. NOT EVER.

WELL. I GUESS I WAS A BIT TOO OPTIMISTIC. AFTER ALL, I MADE IT 18 HOURS BEFORE I INJECTED THE SYRINGE INTO MY ARM..


WHILE I PLUMMETED INTO THE ABYSS, NUKE WAS STILL DRAGGING HIS BUDDY THROUGH THE QUARANTINE ZONE IN SEARCH OF ONE OF THE FEW DOCTORS LEFT HERE..
DUDE, YOU'RE REALLY LETTING YOURSELF DOWN OVER THAT LITTLE BUMP ON THE HEAD. THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG..


THE HEAD WOUND IS NOT THE PROBLEM. WHAT IS SLOWLY BUT SURELY KILLING HIM IS THE INFECTION IN HIS SHIN. THE SCREWS SHOULD HAVE BEEN REMOVED A YEAR AGO. I CAN KEEP HIM ALIVE FOR A FEW MORE DAYS WITH ANTIBIOTICS. BUT THE ONLY THING THAT HELPS IS TO TAKE THE SCREWS OUT. BUT I ONLY DO THAT FOR CASH.

LOOK WHO'S SITTING THERE. - WHERE ARE DODO AND BLACK WIDOW?
CAPTURED BY THE DESPERADOS OR DEAD. I COULDN'T HELP DODO 'CAUSE I HAD TO BRING SKUNK HERE FIRST. WHICH WAS FOR NOTHING BECAUSE I CAN'T PAY THE DOCTOR.
HOW IS LARA?
SHOT THROUGH. NOTHING SERIOUS. BUT SHE WON'T BE ABLE TO WALK FOR A FEW DAYS.
WHY DIDN'T YOU WAIT FOR US?
BECAUSE THE BOSS OF THE ROUGH RIDERS MERCILESSLY ABANDONED HIS PEOPLE AND FORCED US AT GUNPOINT TO TAKE HIM TO SAFETY.
WANTED
MONEY SHOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM. THE DESPERADOS HAVE PUT A LARGE BOUNTY ON THIS BUM'S HEAD. SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO PAY OUR MEDICAL BILLS AND RANSOM OUR GIRLS, IF THEY ARE STILL ALIVE...
WANTED

A LITTLE LATER...
YOU SHOULDN'T FEEL TOO SAFE HERE.
OH, IT'S YOU. HOW DID YOU FIND ME?
NO MATTER. MORE IMPORTANT IS THIS: YOU CAN'T TAKE ANOTHER STEP OUTSIDE WITHOUT SCARING YOURSELF TO DEATH. AND I NEED MONEY IN THE SHORT TERM.
AND I THINK I HAVE THE SOLUTION TO OUR PROBLEMS...

I'LL SCRATCH YOUR EYES OUT!!!
THIS ONE ON PUNTERS?!? FORGET IT! SHE GOES TO THE ARENA TOMORROW. MAKE SURE WE GET OUR INVESTMENTS BACK!
WHILE I WAS TRYING TO PREPARE FOR MY IMPENDING DEMISE, THEY WERE LOOKING FOR ME ELSEWHERE..
PEACE, SISTERS. I JUST HAVE ONE QUESTION. YOU WORK FOR THE DESPERADOS, RIGHT? HAVE YOU SEEN A WOMAN THERE IN THE LAST DAYS? SHE'S CALLED DODO, RED HAIR, TATTOOS ON HER ARMS..
THE NEXT DAY..
DOES IT STILL REFUSE TO DO ITS NATURAL WORK? THEN I HEREBY SENTENCE IT TO REMAIN IN THE ARENA UNTIL DEATH.
AT THE END OF TODAY´S BATTLE DAY I PRESENT ANOTHER TREAT. A FIGHT TO DEATH WITHOUT WEAPONS BETWEEN DODO AND OUR MOST FEARSOME FIGHTER, THE BERSERK..
JUST FOR YOUR INFORMATION. TO INCREASE DODO'S ATTACK READINESS, WE PLACED A SYRINGE SET UNDER THE BERSERK.
YES YES, THROW HER IN ALREADY!

DEAR AUDIENCE. I PRESENT... THE BERSERK, THE LAST SURVIVOR OF A FAILED EXPERIMENT TO BREED A NEW WARRIOR RACE...
WITH 17 CONSECUTIVE WINS BY KILL-OUT, THE BERSERK IS AN ABSOLUTE LOCAL HERO. I'M GIVING ODDS OF TWO TO ONE FOR THE BERSERK AND TWENTY TO ONE FOR THE CHALLENGER DODO. WHO WANTS TO BET WITH ME?
RIEN NE VA PLUS. LET THE BERSERK OFF THE CHAIN!

I FEEL NO PRIDE BECAUSE OF THIS VICTORY. I MAULED A HUMAN BEING WITH MY BARE HANDS JUST BECAUSE HE STOOD BETWEEN ME AND A HEROIN SYRINGE. EVEN THOUGH THERE MAY NOT HAVE BEEN MUCH HUMANITY LEFT IN THIS BIZARRE MONSTER. BUT THAT PROBABLY ALSO APPLIES TO ME IN MY CONDITION AT THE TIME.
I WANT THIS BITCH DEAD! DON'T ANY OF YOU COWARDS WANT TO GAIN FAME AND HONOR AND CHALLENGE HER?
YOU THERE. YOU VOLUNTEER!
OH, DEAR!
DON'T FIGHT BACK. AND I PROMISE YOU IT WILL BE OVER IN TEN MINUTES.

YOU BETTER PUT YOUR GUNS DOWN!

CATCH! NOW GIVE ME THE BOUNTY!

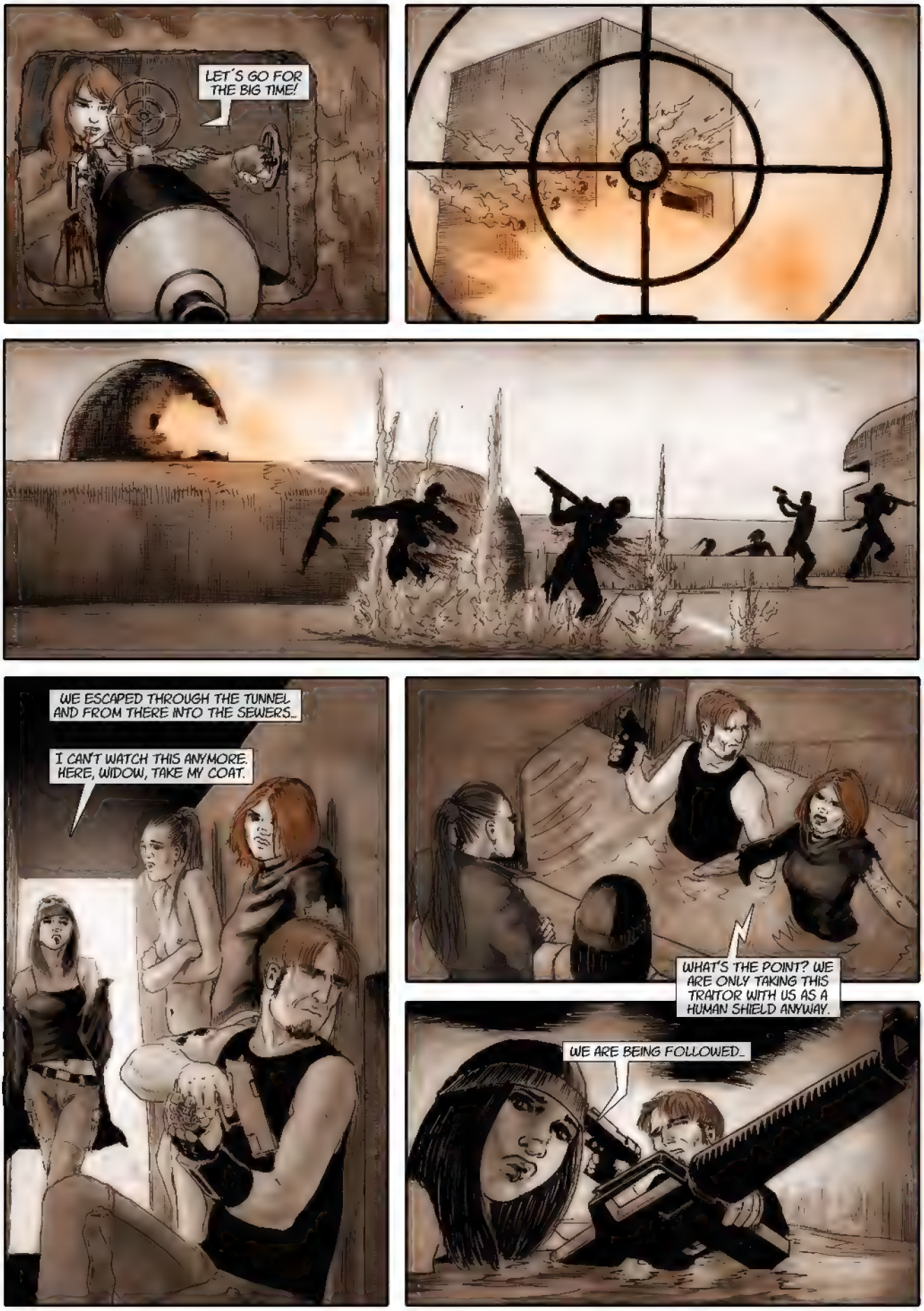
VICTORY! I AM THE KING OF THE QUARANTINE ZONE!!!

A LITTLE LATER...
YOU'VE GOT THE MONEY. NOW GET THE FUCK OUT!
I'M OFF. AND FOR NOT BLOWING YOU UP, I'M TAKING DODO WITH ME.

I THINK THE GUY'S BLUFFING. KILL HIM!
TOO BAD, BABY. I THOUGHT WE COULD DO IT WITHOUT A MASSACRE.

TAKE AN EXPLOSIVE CHARGE AND ENGAGE THE BUNKER FROM THE FLANK. I'LL COME FRONTAL AND DRAW THE MACHINE GUN FIRE.
BUT THE GUYS IN THE BUNKER DON'T KNOW THAT. CHASE THEM OUT AND THEN TAKE COVER.
THE CHARGES ARE JUST DUMMIES.
I HAVE A HOSTAGE. I WANT TO NEGOTIATE.
I DON'T.

I'M SO SORRY, LITTLE ONE.
I AM STILL SO YOUNG. I DON'T WANNA DIE YET.
FOUND YOUR BASS PLAYER, BUT SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO WANT TO COME WITH US.
OF COURSE NOT. AS LONG AS THERE'S A CRUMB OF HEROIN HERE, SHE WON'T GO WILLINGLY.
HELP ME UP, DODO.
TAKE ME TO THE BUNKER. I'LL COVER YOUR BACK WITH THE GUN SO YOU CAN ESCAPE.
AND LEAVE YOU HERE?!? NO WAY!
I'M ALREADY DEAD, AND YOU KNOW IT.
DID I REALLY KNOW THAT? ANYWAY, I QUICKLY LET MYSELF PERSUADED TO SACRIFICE HER. DON'T JUDGE ME TOO HARSHLY_
THINK ABOUT IT AGAIN. WE CAN STILL GET YOU TO A DOCTOR IN TIME.
WE ARE ONLY LOSING TIME. I CAN'T HOLD OUT MUCH LONGER.


LET´S GO FOR THE BIG TIME!
WE ESCAPED THROUGH THE TUNNEL AND FROM THERE INTO THE SEWERS...
I CAN'T WATCH THIS ANYMORE. HERE, WIDOW, TAKE MY COAT.
WHAT'S THE POINT? WE ARE ONLY TAKING THIS TRAITOR WITH US AS A HUMAN SHIELD ANYWAY.
WE ARE BEING FOLLOWED..

THE COAST IS CLEAR.
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE. LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I PUT MY FULL WEIGHT ON THIS TANK...
HEY HO, LET'S GO!
NOW, OF COURSE, I DON'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHAT CAUSED THE HUGE EXPLOSION THAT DESTROYED BOTH FORTRESSES IN A CHAIN REACTION. BUT I IMAGINE IT WAS OUR TOUGH LITTLE DRUMMER, WHO DIES A HERO'S DEATH TO SAVE US, WITH A NONCHALANT LINE ON HER LIPS..
HERE COMES THE EX-TERMINATOR, YOU RATS!!!

NOW YOU HAVE SAVED MY LIFE AGAIN.
MUST BE LOVE.
BEFORE YOU GET INVOLVED WITH ME, YOU NEED TO KNOW THAT I'VE HAD A BIT OF A DRUG PROBLEM LATELY.
AND I HAVE A PROBLEM WITHOUT ALCOHOL. WE CAN START A SUPPORT GROUP.
DEAL. NOW KISS ME ALREADY, YOU IDIOT!

EPILOGUE - SIX MONTHS LATER, AT NADJA'S (EMPTY) GRAVE...
THANKS FOR GETTING THE CASH FOR MY SURGERY. HOW IS YOUR BABE COPING WITH COLD TURKEY?
NOT SO GOOD.
BAD TIMES FOR THE IWO JIMA GIRLS. DRUMMER - DEAD, BASSIST - DEAD FOUR WEEKS LATER (OVERDOSE), RHYTHM GUITARIST IN COLD TURKEY AND HAND BROKEN. SOMEHOW UNDERSTANDABLE THAT LARA AND FLO LEFT WITHOUT ME AND ARE NOW ENJOYING GREAT SUCCESS AS A DUO ACROSS THE BORDER.
NEVERTHELESS, THIS BETRAYAL REALLY GETS ME DOWN. SO IT'S NO WONDER THAT I KEEP FALLING OFF THE WAGON.
BUT WITH NUKE BY MY SIDE, I'M SURE I'LL BE ABLE TO PULL MYSELF BACK AT SOME POINT...

Iwo Jima Girls - Volume One

Metalheads who don't think that good thrash metal is just for men should listen to our new release of the month:

The Iwo Jima Girls with their album "Volume One", recorded a year ago in the quarantine zone. Unfortunately, the band no longer exists. Rumor has it that several band members are even dead. But reliable information from the Q-Zone is a tricky thing. In any case, singer Flo and lead guitarist Lara are remaining stubbornly silent about the rest of the band. The two of them have now left behind the wall that protects us from the barbarians in the Q-Zone and are doing their own thing under the name X-Calibur. However, X-Calibur actually sound like a couple of DSDS faggots imitating the Iwo Jima Girls. And badly at that.
If you don't like this soft-edged consensus metal, you should rather listen to the raw original versions of the Iwo Jima Girls. As dilletant and primitive as the recording technique in the quarantine zone may be, every one of the eleven tracks here really rocks.

CHAPTER 3

JCM 900

THE FOLLOWING STORY TAKES PLACE A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE FIRST TWO CHAPTERS (AUTHORS NOTE)

IN THE NEAR FUTURE, SOMEWHERE IN THE QUARANTINE ZONE
_WHY AM I SO ANNOYED? BECAUSE I'VE HAD A REALLY SHITTY WEEK.
MY LEGS HURT IN THIS UNCOMFORTABLE POSE. WILL IT TAKE ANY LONGER?
I KNOW, I KNOW, TIME IS MONEY, AND YOU DON'T PAY ME TO TAKE A BREAK.
AN HOUR OR SO. I'LL HURRY UP NOW AND YOU TELL ME WHAT HAS SPOILED YOUR MOOD. AND NOW BACK TO THE STARTING POSITION!

SO, WHAT´S UP NOW?

BUT I CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS FOR MUCH LONGER. AM I DOING THE RIGHT THING?

TURN A LITTLE TO THE LEFT. THE HEAD MORE TOWARDS ME. - SO, WHAT WAS GOING ON?

WE PLAYED AT CROSSFIRE LAST WEEK...

THE AUDIENCE WAS IN A GOOD MOOD AND SO WERE WE. IT WAS THE BEST GIG I´VE EVER HAD WITH THE IWO JIMA GIRLS, UNTIL...

OKAY GUYS, THE NEXT SONG IS CALLED...

STRIP!

NO. THAT'S NOT THE NAME OF THE NEXT SONG. WE´RE PLAYING FOR YOU NOW...

STRIP!!!

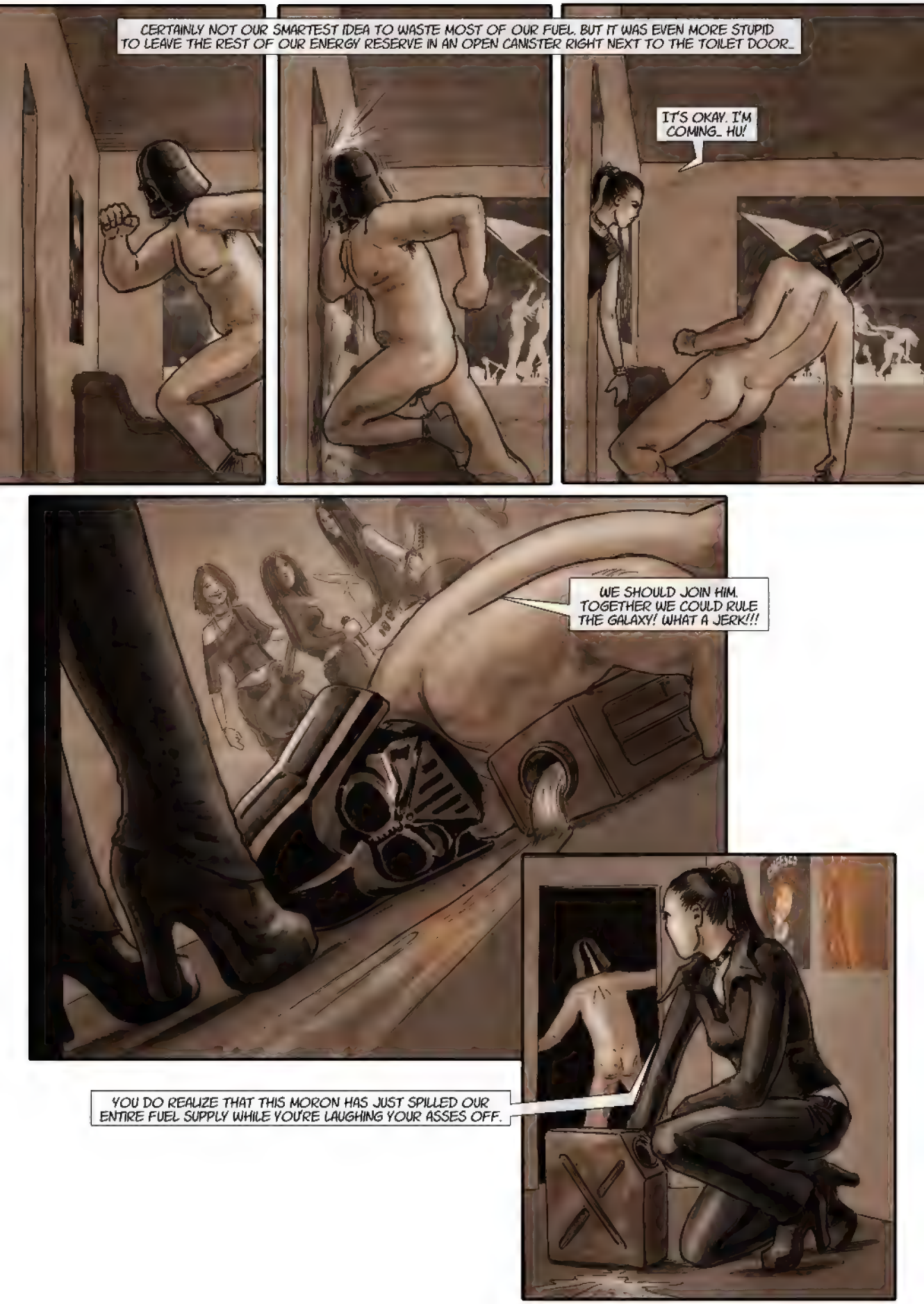
THIS IS THE MOMENT WHEN FLO, OUR SINGER, TOTALLY FREAKS OUT LIKE A SUPPOSITORY...
...THE FISTS FLY. A BYSTANDER CATCHES ONE, TOO. THEN HE PUNCHES THE NEXT ONE IN THE FACE. AND A FEW SECONDS LATER THE WILDEST MASS BRAWL BREAKS OUT.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? EVERY ONE OF YOUR CONCERTS ENDS PREMATURELY WITH A BRAWL. YOU PROVOKE THAT, TOO BECAUSE YOU ONLY HAVE A 25-MINUTE SET AND YOU DON´T WANT ANYONE TO NOTICE.
OF COURSE. THERE´S MORE TO THE STORY..
AS WE WERE CLEANING UP AT DAWN, A GUY CAME UP TO BLACK WIDOW..
INTERESTING SHOW YOU GIRLS ARE PUTTING ON.
OH REALLY?
LISTEN..
HEY GUYS, CAPTAIN AHAB HERE COMES ON BEHALF OF THE ROUGH RIDERS. THEY WANT TO BOOK US FOR A GIG..
THE PAY WOULDN´T BE BAD. BUT 60 MINUTES NET PLAYING TIME.. WE HAVE TO REHEARSE A FEW TIMES FOR THAT.

YEAH. WE SIMPLY HAVE TO DOUBLE OUR SET. BESIDES, THE ROUGH RIDERS BASE IS FIFTY KILOMETERS AWAY. THAT´S A BIT TOO MUCH FOR OUR SECURITY TROLL, ISN´T IT, TROLL?
TRUE.
BACK IN THE REHEARSAL ROOM, WE DECIDED TO PLAY THE GIG AND START THE NECESSARY REHEARSALS STRAIGHT AWAY.
MY EX HAS A VAN. I'M GONNA STEAL IT FROM HIM. THEN WE´LL HAVE SOLVED THE TRAVEL PROBLEM.
CHEESES
KREIS
EXHAUSTED? DRINK THIS!
ARE YOU TRYING TO POISON ME?!?
GOOD. IF IT DOESN'T MAKE YOU BLIND, YOU CAN DRINK IT. TO OUR NEXT GIG.
CAN YOU STILL SEE MY FINGER?
OF COURSE!
BUT ONLY THE ONE! AFTER ALL, THE STUFF IS INTENDED AS FUEL FOR OUR POWER GENERATOR.

JUST THE ONE DRINK, I CAN STOP AT ANY TIME. THE GREAT SELF-DECEPTION OF EVERY DRINKER.
3 DAYS LATER, IN A DARK DIVE, I CAME TO. WITH NO MEMORY. THE WAY BACK TO THE REHEARSAL ROOM WAS PURE HELL.
HAVE A HANGOVER LIKE THAT?
WHAT'S THIS HONK?!?
YOU BROUGHT HIM IN TWO DAYS AGO. AT SOME POINT, YOU LEFT. . LORD VADER STAYED. AND HE'S BEEN SITTING THERE EVER SINCE.
IS THE GUY DEAD?
WE'LL FIND OUT IN A MOMENT.

ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR..
WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!


CERTAINLY NOT OUR SMARTEST IDEA TO WASTE MOST OF OUR FUEL. BUT IT WAS EVEN MORE STUPID TO LEAVE THE REST OF OUR ENERGY RESERVE IN AN OPEN CANISTER RIGHT NEXT TO THE TOILET DOOR...
IT'S OKAY. I'M COMING... HU!
WE SHOULD JOIN HIM. TOGETHER WE COULD RULE THE GALAXY! WHAT A JERK!!!
YOU DO REALIZE THAT THIS MORON HAS JUST SPILLED OUR ENTIRE FUEL SUPPLY WHILE YOU'RE LAUGHING YOUR ASSES OFF.

AFTER THAT, WE WERE ABLE TO REHEARSE FOR EXACTLY EIGHT MINUTES UNTIL OUR GENERATOR RAN OUT OF GAS. THAT BRINGS US TO THIS MORNING. IT WAS TIME FOR THE WEEKLY CIGARETTE ALLOTMENT. SO FLO AND I MADE OUR WAY TO THE WALL. MAYBE WE COULD FIND SOME FUEL HERE.
HAHAHAHAHA!!!
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
GASOLINE! OR ANYTHING HIGH-PROOF THAT CAN BE USED AS FUEL! HAHAHAHA!!!
SAUFEN, SAUFEN!!!
WAIT A MINUTE! I'LL JUST GO DOWN TO MY SECRET CELLAR. MAYBE I STILL HAVE SOMETHING THERE. HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT? 100 LITERS OR A THOUSAND?
YOU JUST HAVE TO LOOK. I'M REALLY GOOD AT THIS GOING-DOWN-THE-STAIRS THING. BUT JOKING ASIDE. DO YOU THINK I'D HAVE SUCH BIG ARMS IF I COULD MOTORIZE THE STUFF FROM ONE MARKET TO ANOTHER?

BARCODE IDENTIFIES INDIVIDUAL AS FILE NUMBER 4883/7C6 _ ALIAS DODO _ POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS _ ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR _ REGISTERED IN QUARANTINE ZONE FOR SEVEN MONTHS _ NO BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS SINCE THEN. - YOU'VE DONE WELL, DODO. - HAND OUT TWO PACKS!
SHOW BARCODE. DON´T MOVE FOR 2 SECONDS. DON´T LOOK INTO THE LASER.
AND? DID YOU FIND SOME FUEL?
NOPE. THEY'RE ALL JUST MAKING FUN OF ME. AT LEAST YOU HAVE YOUR CIGARETTES.
HOWEVER, THEY´VE ALSO BEEN MORE GENEROUS IN THE PAST.
LET'S GET OUTTA HERE. I ALWAYS FEEL VERY UNCOMFORTABLE SO CLOSE TO THE WALL.
SHOW BARCODE. DON´T MOVE FOR 2 SECONDS. DON´T LOOK INTO THE..

WHAT A DISASTER. HOPEFULLY THE OTHERS AT LEAST FOUND SOMETHING TO EAT.
YEAH. I'M REALLY SORRY WE'VE WALKED SO FAR FOR NOTHING.
NOT YOUR FAULT. BUT WE SHOULD TAKE A LOOK AT THE GUY WHO TIPPED YOU OFF THAT THERE WOULD BE GAS AT THE BORDER.
RIGHT. WHAT A WONDERFUL TIME IT MUST HAVE BEEN, WHEN ELECTRICITY STILL CAME OUT OF THE SOCKET AND THERE WAS ONE OF THOSE GAS STATIONS EVERY FEW HUNDRED METERS.
YES, EVERYTHING USED TO BE BETTER. YOU SOUND LIKE MY GRANDMA.
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY...
THIS LOOKS LIKE TROUBLE.

THIS IS OUR TERRITORY. IF YOU WANT TO PASS THROUGH HERE, YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY A DUTY. AND SINCE YOU DON'T LOOK VERY SOLBENT, YOU'LL HAVE TO WORK OFF YOUR DEBTS.
SOLBENT, HUH? THE WORD YOU MEAN IS SOLVENT, YOU MORON. NOW MOVE ASIDE, OR YOU'LL GET A BEATING!
IT HURTS MY LITTLE BROTHER, WHEN YOU MAKE FUN OF HIS PRONUNCIATION LIKE THAT. YOUR CHANCES OF STAYING ALIVE ARE GETTING SLIMMER.

YOUR BROTHER, HUH? YOUR PARENTS MUST HAVE BEEN SIBLINGS TOO, RIGHT? AND THOSE TWO JERKS SNEAKING UP BEHIND US, ARE THEY PART OF THE FAMILY, TOO?
ENOUGH OF THE CHATTER! LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS!

HAVE YOU THOUGHT THIS THROUGH? AFTER ALL, THERE ARE ONLY FOUR OF YOU.

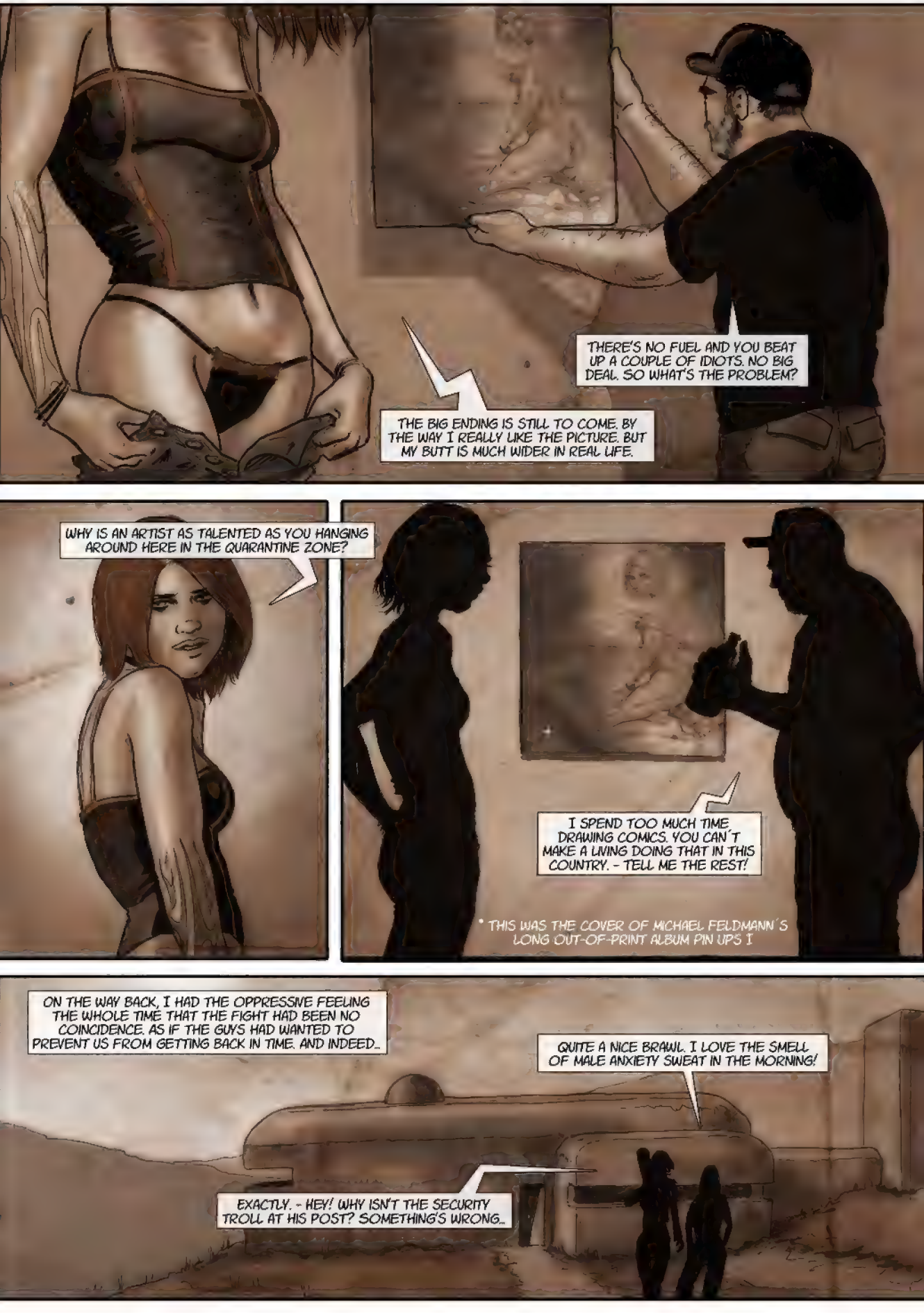
SO DO YOU STILL HAVE SUCH A BIG MOUTH NOW?

YOU WONDER IF I'M REALLY THAT COOL? I WISH I WAS. IT'S ALL JUST A FACADE. BECAUSE IF THE BAD GUYS SEE YOU SHAKING AT THE KNEES, YOU'VE ALREADY LOST...

BUT I HAVE ALSO HAD TO DEAL WITH FAR MORE FEARSOME OPPONENTS..
DON´T..
RUN INTO..
MY LINE..
OF FIRE..
YOU..

MORON!

WOW! DODO, THAT WAS SO COOL!!!
HE'S STILL GOT THE GUN IN HIS HAND. WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE.


THERE'S NO FUEL AND YOU BEAT UP A COUPLE OF IDIOTS. NO BIG DEAL. SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
THE BIG ENDING IS STILL TO COME. BY THE WAY I REALLY LIKE THE PICTURE. BUT MY BUTT IS MUCH WIDER IN REAL LIFE.
WHY IS AN ARTIST AS TALENTED AS YOU HANGING AROUND HERE IN THE QUARANTINE ZONE?
I SPEND TOO MUCH TIME DRAWING COMICS. YOU CAN´T MAKE A LIVING DOING THAT IN THIS COUNTRY. - TELL ME THE REST!
* THIS WAS THE COVER OF MICHAEL FELDMANN´S LONG OUT-OF-PRINT ALBUM PIN UPS I
ON THE WAY BACK, I HAD THE OPPRESSIVE FEELING THE WHOLE TIME THAT THE FIGHT HAD BEEN NO COINCIDENCE. AS IF THE GUYS HAD WANTED TO PREVENT US FROM GETTING BACK IN TIME. AND INDEED..
QUITE A NICE BRAWL. I LOVE THE SMELL OF MALE ANXIETY SWEAT IN THE MORNING!
EXACTLY. - HEY! WHY ISN'T THE SECURITY TROLL AT HIS POST? SOMETHING'S WRONG..

WANT TO SHOOT YOUR FINGERS OFF WITH THE SHOTGUN? AND WHY ARE YOU STANDING GUARD AND NOT THE SECURITY TROLL?
THE DAMN TROLL IS OUT IN THE BUSHES SLEEPING IT OFF. AND WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN ALL THIS TIME? WHENEVER YOUR GUERRILLA SKILLS ARE NEEDED, YOU'RE FAR AWAY.
FUCK YOU!
HOLY SHIT.
YES, EXACTLY. EVERYTHING THAT THE PIGS DIDN'T TAKE, THEY BROKE. WE TRIED TO STOP THEM, BUT WE TOOK QUITE A BEATING. ALL OUR EQUIPMENT IS GONE. WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO NOW?

DO YOU REALIZE WHAT A SHITTY SITUATION WE´RE IN? WE ARE CONTRACTUALLY OBLIGATED TO PLAY A 60-MINUTE GIG FOR THE ROUGH RIDERS. THE PENALTY FOR BREAKING THE CONTRACT IS PAID IN BLOOD!
I´M HANGING ON FOR DEAR LIFE. SO I'M PREPARED TO DO ANYTHING TO GET OUR EQUIPMENT BACK. I DON'T CARE HOW MANY BONES I HAVE TO BREAK.
AND I ALREADY KNOW WHERE TO START LOOKING.

IMPRESSIVE.
BY THE WAY, DEAR READER. I ALSO MAKE COMMISSIONS. SO IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, PM TO ME ON SOCIAL MEDIA!
_JUST IN CASE YOU DON'T FOLLOW ME: MICHAELFELDMANNCOMICARTIST ON INSTAGRAM OR FACEBOOK

CHAPTER 4

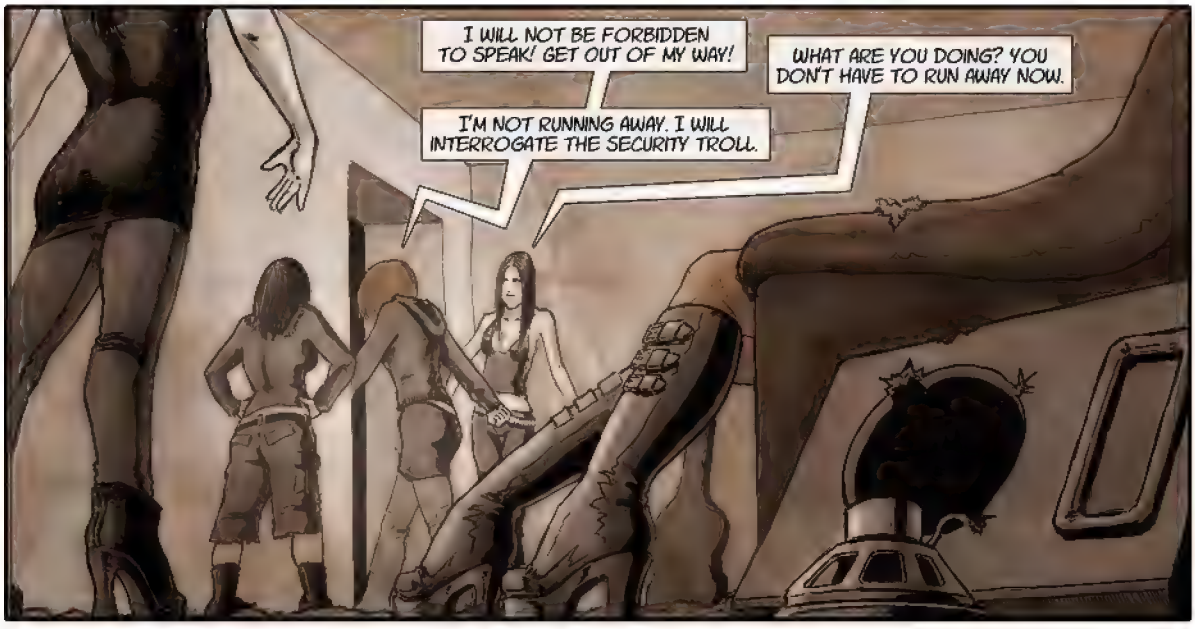
G - A# - C .. G - A#-C#-C .. PLAYING THE GUITAR CALMS MY NERVES. I PLAY SIMPLE RIFFS LIKE A MANTRA. IT HELPS ME TO COME DOWN. AND THAT'S NECESSARY, BECAUSE MY FRIENDS AND ME ARE IN DEEP SHIT. BUT I'M STILL IN GOOD MOOD BECAUSE I STILL HAVE MY GUITAR. BUT RIGHT FROM THE START..

I AM DODO, FORMER GUERRILLA FIGHTER AND NOW RHYTHM GUITARIST OF THE IWO JIMA GIRLS. I LIVE IN THE QUARANTINE ZONE. HERE THERE IS NO WORK, NO ELECTRICITY, NO PETROL, AND NO HOPE... ONLY ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND WEAPONS ARE NEVER LACKING HERE. AND THERE IS NO WAY OUT. EXCEPT FOR THE MUSIC. SO FAR, WE HAVE BEEN SOMETHING OF AN INSIDER TIP. OUR NEXT GIG WAS GOING TO CHANGE THAT. AND THE MOMENT THINGS START TO LOOK UP, ALL OUR EQUIPMENT IS STOLEN (EXCEPT FOR MY GUITAR).

WE HAVE TO PICK UP THE TRAIL OF THE THIEVES, AND FOR THAT I NEED A CLEAR HEAD. AND THAT'S WHY I'VE BEEN SITTING HERE PLAYING THE SMOKE ON THE WATER RIFF FOR HALF AN HOUR. .. G - A# - C ..

EARLIER IN THE DAY IN OUR REHEARSAL ROOM...
HOLY SHIT!!!
EXACTLY. EVERYTHING THAT THE PIGS DIDN'T TAKE WITH THEM, THEY BROKE. WE TRIED TO STOP THEM, BUT WE TOOK QUITE A BEATING. ALL OUR EQUIPMENT IS GONE. WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO NOW?
AND SO SHORTLY BEFORE OUR NEXT GIG. YOU CAN'T HAVE THAT MUCH BAD LUCK.
THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH BAD LUCK! SOMEONE IS OUT TO GET US AND WANTS TO PREVENT US FROM PERFORMING.
I REPEAT: WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
DON'T GET HYSTERICAL, WIDOW!
DON'T GET HYSTERICAL! DON'T GET HYSTERICAL! HOW ARE YOU GOING TO PLAY A CONCERT WITH THIS RUINED DRUM KIT? HUH?

IT WAS A GREAT IDEA TO HIRE THIS IDIOT AS SECURITY. HATS OFF, DODO.
DON'T YOU HAVE STAIRS TO GUARD BACK THERE, LARISSA?
MERDE! CAN'T YOU STOP THE FUCKING BITCHING?


I WILL NOT BE FORBIDDEN TO SPEAK! GET OUT OF MY WAY!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU DON'T HAVE TO RUN AWAY NOW.
I'M NOT RUNNING AWAY. I WILL INTERROGATE THE SECURITY TROLL.

WAKE UP, YOU FOOL!!!

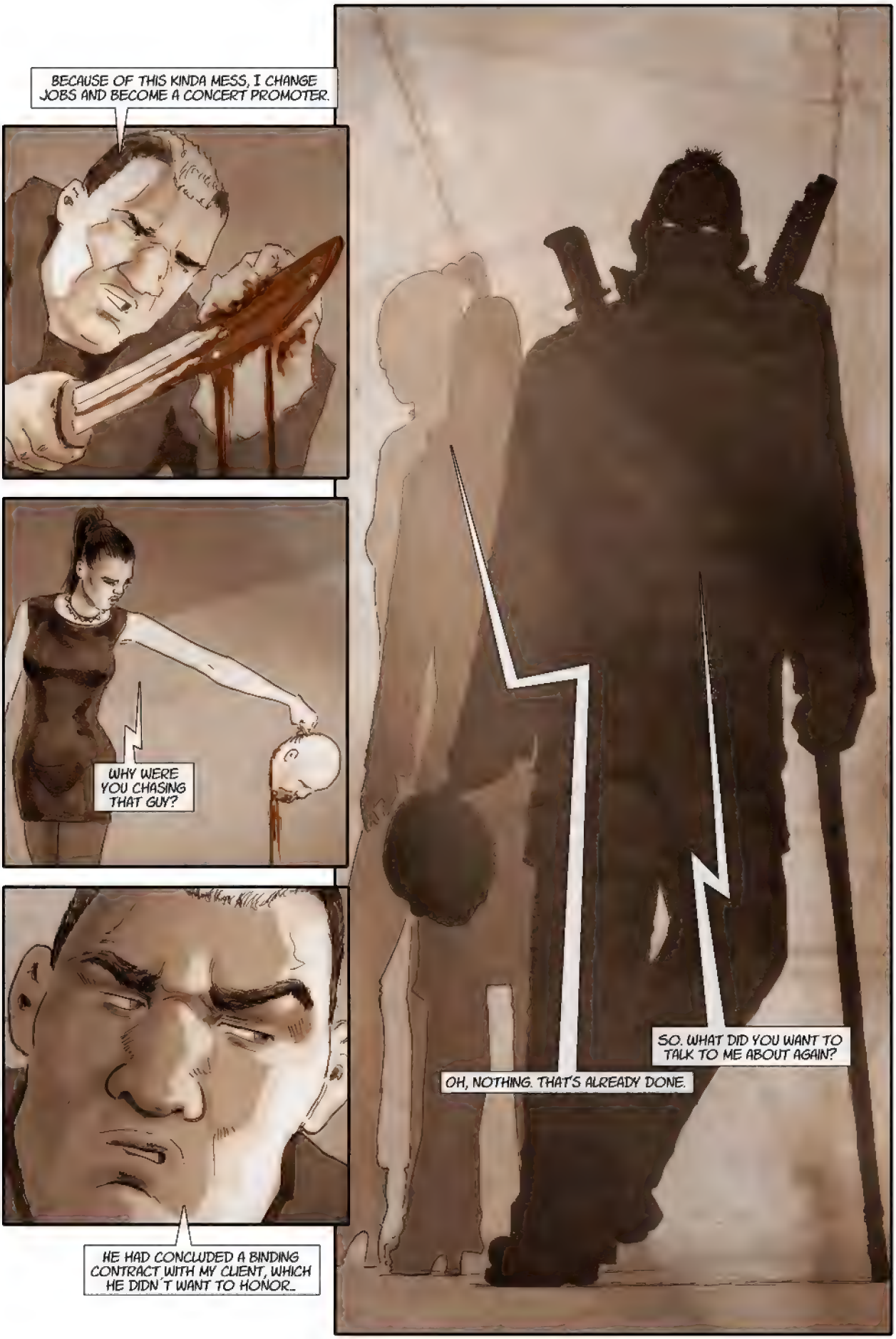
SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSEEEEEEEEEEEEEECCCCCCCCCCCCUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU...
...RRRRRRRIIIIIIIITTTTTTTTTTTTYYYYYYYYYYY TROOOOOOOOOOOOHOOOOOOOOOOOOLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL...
SECURITY TROLL?
WHAT DRUGS DID YOU TAKE?
I THINK HE'S COMING AROUND.

SHOULD I SHOOT A LOAD OF BUCKSHOT UP HIS ASS? MAYBE THEN HE'LL STOP SCREAMING LIKE A GIRL.
NO, SHOOT HIM IN THE HEAD. THAT'S NOT A VITAL ORGAN FROM THIS IDIOT.
WAIT. DON'T DO THAT.
DAMN, MY HEAD HURTS. THAT FAKE BLONDE FUCKED ME OVER...
I WAS ON MY WAY TO THE BUNKER TO START MY SHIFT. BUT IT WAS SO COLD. SO I TOOK A SHORT DETOUR TO THE RAT HOLE TO WARM UP. AND THERE SHE SUDDENLY STOOD IN FRONT OF ME...
COME ON, BIG GUY. DRINK WITH ME!
ALL RIGHT. BUT JUST ONE DRINK.
"I TOOK OVER THE WATCH SHORTLY AFTERWARDS. EVERYTHING WAS STILL FINE THEN."
I THINK I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE.
GOOD FOR YOU. THE REHEARSAL ROOM IS WELL LOCKED. NO SPECIAL INCIDENTS. IF YOU HAVE NO FURTHER QUESTIONS, I'LL LEAVE NOW.
"...BUT ABOUT AN HOUR LATER, I SUDDENLY FELT SO FOGGY. I WENT INTO THE FRESH AIR, AND THEN I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING."

THE FOOL LET BLONDIE POUR SOME KIND OF ANESTHETIC INTO HIS GLASS.
YEAH, SURE. IF WE WANT OUR AMPS BACK, WE NEED TO FIND THE BLONDE HOOKER. SHOULDN'T BE TOO HARD TO PICK UP HER TRAIL. I BET IT'S BEEN TWENTY YEARS SINCE A WOMAN'S BEEN IN THE RAT HOLE.
I LIKE MEN LIKE YOU.
COME AND DRINK WITH ME.
HUH?!?
WE CAN KEEP IT SHORT. YOU VIOLATED THE BAN ON DRINKING BEFORE WORK. YOU ARE FIRED.
AND NOW? OFF TO THE RAT HOLE?
YES, BUT I'LL DO THAT ALONE. IN THE MEANTIME, YOU NEED TO TAKE CARE OF OTHER THINGS.
LIKE WHAT?
BEGGING FOR OUR LIVES FROM THE CONCERT ORGANIZER. JUST IN CASE WE CAN'T PLAY.

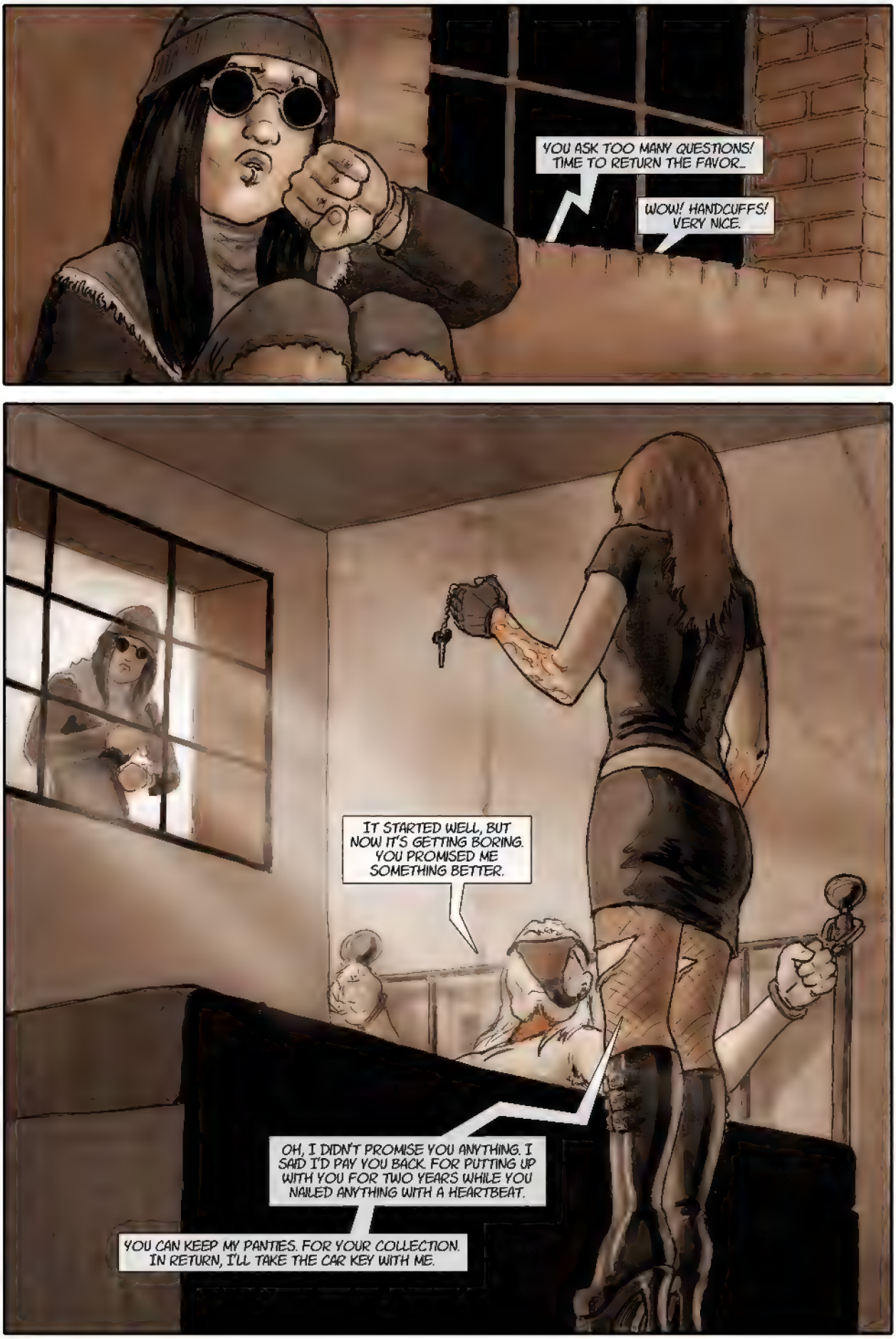
A LITTLE LATER...
CUT THE CRAP AND COME OUT!
YOU WON'T GET ME ALIVE!!!
THAT'S FINE BY ME.
WAIT HERE. THIS WILL ONLY TAKE A MINUTE. THEN WE'LL TALK.

BANG!
BANG!
BANG!
SKUNK?
HOLD THIS.


BECAUSE OF THIS KINDA MESS, I CHANGE JOBS AND BECOME A CONCERT PROMOTER.
WHY WERE YOU CHASING THAT GUY?
HE HAD CONCLUDED A BINDING CONTRACT WITH MY CLIENT, WHICH HE DIDN'T WANT TO HONOR..
SO. WHAT DID YOU WANT TO TALK TO ME ABOUT AGAIN?
OH, NOTHING. THAT'S ALREADY DONE.

THE BOUNTY HUNTER SKUNK HAD RECRUITED US FOR THE GIG WITH THE ROUGH RIDERS. AND NOW HE HAD MADE IT CLEAR TO US THAT THERE WAS NO WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE...
HOWEVER, WE HAVE MADE GREATER PROGRESS IN ANOTHER AREA...

GNNNN.
OOOOOOUUUUUH.
YES.AH.AAH!!!
APPLAUSE, APPLAUSE.
AM I GOOD OR WHAT? DO YOU REGRET LEAVING ME NOW?

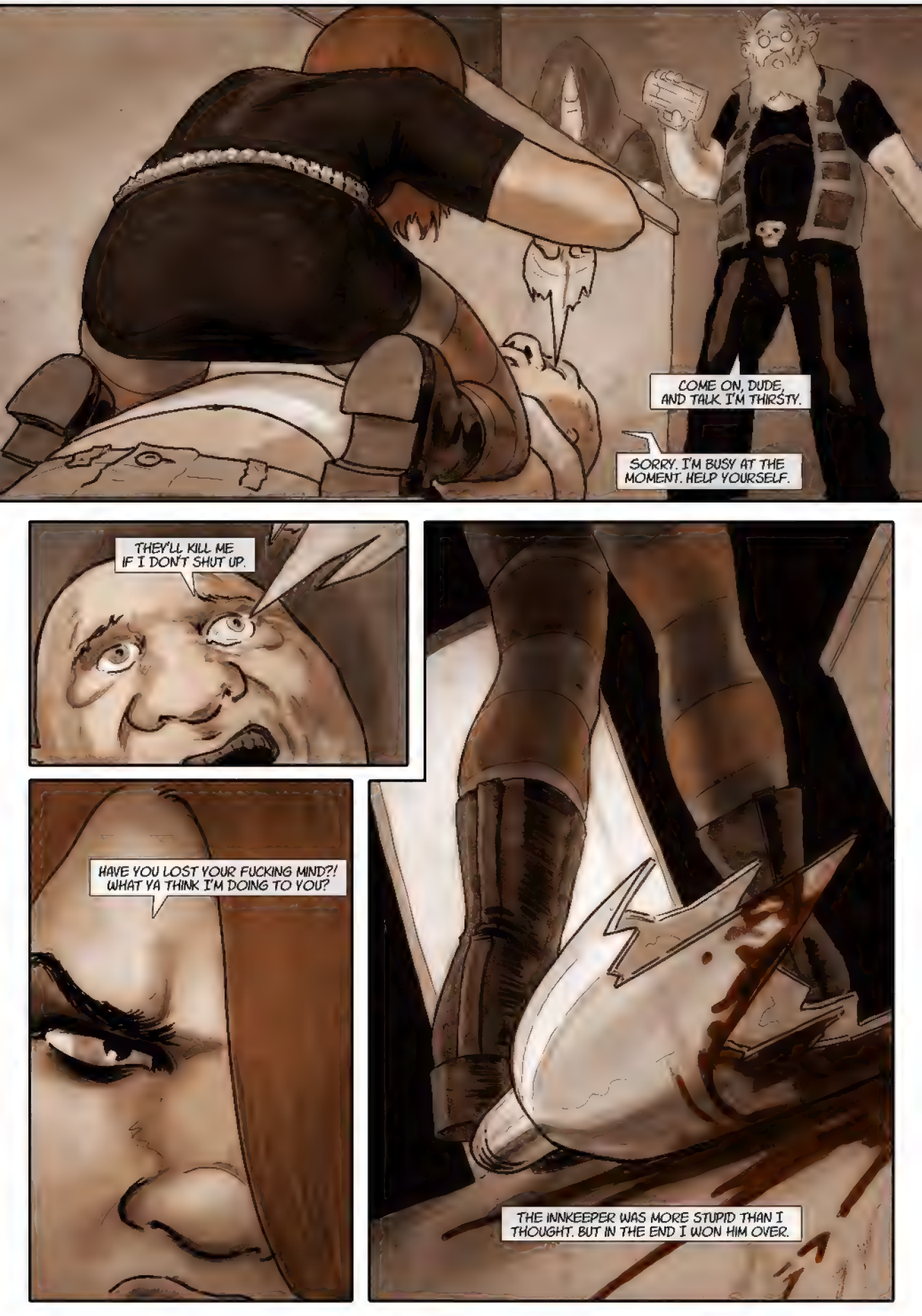

YOU ASK TOO MANY QUESTIONS! TIME TO RETURN THE FAVOR..
WOW! HANDCUFFS! VERY NICE.
IT STARTED WELL, BUT NOW IT'S GETTING BORING. YOU PROMISED ME SOMETHING BETTER.
OH, I DIDN'T PROMISE YOU ANYTHING. I SAID I'D PAY YOU BACK. FOR PUTTING UP WITH YOU FOR TWO YEARS WHILE YOU NAILED ANYTHING WITH A HEARTBEAT.
YOU CAN KEEP MY PANTIES. FOR YOUR COLLECTION. IN RETURN, I'LL TAKE THE CAR KEY WITH ME.

YOU SIMPLY HAVE WHAT IT TAKES!
CAN YOU DRIVE IT?
OF COURSE. OTHERWISE THERE WOULD BE NO POINT IN STEALING THE CAR.
SO! NOW WE HAVE AN OFFICIAL TOUR BUS.
ALL THAT'S MISSING ARE A FEW INSTRUMENTS THAT WE CAN PACK.
YES, EXACTLY. I'M GOING TO THE TOILET AGAIN.
IWO JIMA GIRLS

THIS BRINGS US TO MY PART IN THE STORY..
I HAD TO PICK UP THE TRAIL OF THE BLONDE BOMBSHELL.
SO OFF TO THE PUB DISTRICT. I EXPOSE MYSELF TO A DOUBLE HUMILIATION. A WOMAN IS ONLY ALLOWED HERE IN A MINI. AND ONLY AFTER A THOROUGH BODY SEARCH.
OPEN 24 hou
BAR 2
THREE QUICK MOVEMENTS AND THE GORILLA WOULD BE LYING DEAD IN THE DIRT. BUT I HAVE TO PULL MYSELF TOGETHER. I CAN'T AFFORD TO BE SENT AWAY AT THE MOMENT..
CALM DOWN DODO, CALM DOWN!!!

WELL, DODO? ON THE ROAD SO EARLY?
I'M NOT HERE FOR FUN. BESIDES, I HAVE TO GO TO THE RAT HOLE.
TOO BAD. A PAYING CUSTOMER WOULDN´T HAVE BEEN A BAD THING BEFORE MY NEW DOORMAN DRINKS ME DRY!
ARRIVED AT THE RAT HOLE...
TWO WOMEN WITHIN ONE DAY! THE MADNESS!

MY OPPONENT WORKS WITH HER FEMININE CHARMS...
JINGLE JINGLE
I'M NOT THAT GOOD AT IT.
CLANK
THAT'S WHY I CHOOSE A MORE SUBTLE APPROACH WHEN I NEED INFORMATION...
TALK, OR YOUR EYE IS GONE!


COME ON, DUDE, AND TALK. I'M THIRSTY.
SORRY. I'M BUSY AT THE MOMENT. HELP YOURSELF.
THEY'LL KILL ME IF I DON'T SHUT UP.
HAVE YOU LOST YOUR FUCKING MIND?! WHAT YA THINK I'M DOING TO YOU?
THE INNKEEPER WAS MORE STUPID THAN I THOUGHT. BUT IN THE END I WON HIM OVER.

TWO DAYS EARLIER, A STRANGER HAD GIVEN THE INNKEEPER A LARGE TIP. ALL HE ASKED IN RETURN WAS THAT HE SHOULD CALL A CERTAIN NUMBER THE NEXT TIME OUR SECURITY TROLL TURNED UP...
NO CHANGE.
THE REST IS FOR YOU.
WHEN THE TROLL SHOWED UP IN THE RAT HOLE YESTERDAY, THE ASSHOLE CALLED AND FIVE MINUTES LATER BLONDIE WAS THERE TO POISON THE IDIOT.
I GOT THIS RAT TO CALL HIS CONTACT AGAIN..
AH. HELLO? - I WANT MORE MONEY, OTHERWISE I'LL SPILL THE BEANS!
HE HAD ASKED FOR A MEETING AT CROSSFIRE THAT EVENING. HOWEVER, I WILL BE THERE IN HIS PLACE..

I HAD DONE A LITTLE MORE RESEARCH. THE BLONDE CALLED HERSELF RED DEVIL AND WAS A PROFESSIONAL KILLER. SO SHE WAS A WORTHY OPPONENT.
THE NIGHT IN FRONT OF THE CROSSFIRE...
THAT MUST BE HER. CAMOUFLAGE IS NOT HER STRONG POINT...
IT´S A GOOD THING THAT THE SECURITY IN CROSSFIRE IS VERY CONSCIENTIOUS ABOUT SMUGGLING WEAPONS...
SHIT

THE FACT THAT THIS RED DEVIL COULD MARCH UP HERE WITH A GUN SO CAVALIERLY WAS QUITE A SETBACK. BESIDES, SHE WASN'T ALONE. THE BALD GUY NEXT TO HER AND THE ROCKABILLY ON THE GALLERY WERE BEHAVING SO INCONSPICUOUSLY THAT THEY MIGHT AS WELL HAVE TATTOOED "PROFESSIONAL KILLER" ON THEIR FOREHEADS..
NO PROBLEM AT ALL. I JUST HAD TO KEEP AN EYE ON THE THREE OF THEM WHILE I THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT TO DO..
..JUST STUPID THAT I OVERLOOKED THE FOURTH MAN..
COME WITH ME OR I'LL SLICE YOU!

FIRE
I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE ENOUGH TO DEPRIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO PERFORM. BUT YOU DON'T WANNA GIVE UP. TOO BAD. I DON'T LIKE KILLING WOMEN.
DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ELSE IMPORTANT TO SAY?
TROLL?!

THEREYOUUUAREYOUSNEAKYCUNT_
THE SCRAP METAL COLLECTORS, WHO ARE NOT AFRAID TO LOOT CORPSES, LATER CUT 46 BULLETS OUT OF THE SECURITY TROLL.
BUT BEFORE THE TROLL FINALLY WENT DOWN, HE BEAT THE THREE LACKEYS TO DEATH WITH HIS BARE FISTS.

CLICK.
CLICK.
CLICK.

LOOKS BAD. I'VE ALREADY KILLED YOU. IT'S UP TO YOU HOW MUCH PAIN YOU HAVE TO SUFFER UNTIL IT'S OVER.
GET ME A DOCTOR OR STAB ME! BUT STOP THE CLICHES!

MY GOD, WHAT A MONSTER I'VE BECOME!
WHERE IS OUR EQUIPMENT? SPEAK AND THE PAIN WILL STOP IMMEDIATELY.
I BEG YOU. STOP IT. I WILL TALK.

SHE HAD BITTEN OFF HER TONGUE IN PAIN AND COULD ONLY STAMMER. BUT I FOUND OUT WHAT I NEEDED TO KNOW. FINALLY, I ASKED HER ABOUT HER EMPLOYER...
I WORK FOR GR...
REVENGE.
WHOA. YOU IDIOT!

OKAY. MISSION SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED. WELL. AT LEAST THE FIRST PART OF IT. TOMORROW WE WILL GET OUR EQUIPMENT BACK. YIPPEE! - BUT...
BUT WAS THAT NECESSARY? SO MUCH CRUELTY. TO SLOWLY TORTURE A YOUNG WOMAN TO DEATH. I COULD SAY: WHY SHOULD YOU FEEL SORRY FOR SOMEONE WHO WANTED TO KILL YOU JUST A MINUTE AGO?
BUT I WON´T BE ABLE TO TALK MY WAY OUT OF IT. I AM A BAD PERSON!
SO YOU BETTER NOT GET IN MY WAY!!!

EPILOGUE - BEYOND THE WALL, SECURITY SECTOR IV BRANCH HEADQUARTERS FRONTEX, INC. _
OUR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE QUARANTINE ZONE IS LARGELY COMPLETE. CONTROL OF THE Q-Z IS NOW YOUR RESPONSIBILITY. REPORT.
Frontex, inc.
befördert hiermit den Mitarbeiter
Kevin Kurtz
wegen herausragender militärischer Leistungen zum
I´VE STARTED SABOTAGING THE GIGS OF ANTISOCIAL ROCK BANDS LIKE THOSE IWO JIMA GIRLS. SOON I WILL START A GANG WAR. I´VE ALSO HIRED VARIOUS BOUNTY HUNTERS TO LIQUIDATE ANY EX-ARMY PERSONNEL WHO ARE IN Q-Z.

A FEW HOURS BEFORE IN THE Q-Z_
I´VE HEARD THAT RED DEVIL HAS KICKED THE BUCKET. AND NOW I'M SUDDENLY GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU AGAIN. ALL RIGHT, THEN. I'LL DO THE JOB. BUT THEN I´LL QUIT_
WANTED
"NUKE"

HADES SYNDROME

COLLECTOR´S EDITION

HADES SYNDROME - THE LAST GIG (2024)

THE BEGINNING OF THE POST-APOCALYPTIC SAGA OF DODO AND NUKE CONTAINS THE STORIES "THE LAST GIG" (2011) AND "CROSSFIRE 1 AND 2" (2013)

HADES SYNDROME - HUNTING SEASON (2021)

THE SERIAL KILLER DEARHUNTER MAKES THE QUARANTINE ZONE UNSAFE. DODO AND NUKE DECIDE TO HUNT DOWN THE KILLER.
THIS ANTHOLOGY CONTAINS THE ISSUES "HUNTING SEASON I TO VI" AND "FREE WILL" (ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED FROM 2014 TO 2016).

HADES SYNDROME - THE ESCAPE (EXPECTED 2024)

DODO AND NUKE HAVE TO LEAVE THE QUARANTINE ZONE AND DARE TO ESCAPE OVER THE WALL.
ORIGINALLY TITLED HADES SYNDROME, THE SIX-PART SERIES WAS FIRST PUBLISHED BETWEEN 2007 AND 2012. THIS IS A PROVISIONAL COVER.

HADES SYNDROME - EPITAPH (EXPECTED 2026)

SIX YEARS AFTER THE ESCAPE.
THE END OF THE GREAT SAGA OF DODO AND NUKE.
THE FIRST THREE ISSUES WERE PUBLISHED FROM 2015 TO 2018. THE TWO MISSING ISSUES ARE EXPECTED TO BE PUBLISHED IN 2024 AND 2025.
THE ANTHOLOGY WILL THEN FOLLOW A YEAR LATER.

THE PRODUCER

THE ENTHUSIASTIC COMIC FAN **SEBASTIAN SCHWARZBOLD** IS THE HEAD OF THE SMALL INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER **THENEXTART**, WHICH ALSO PUBLISHES MICHAEL'S SERIES "HADES SYNDROME" AND "SENECA AKTE". OTHER SERIES FROM THE PUBLISHER ARE "DER ENGEL" AND "THE COUNSELOR" BY TOMPPA / ROBERT HERACLES, "STARCHILD" BY HANNES KLESSE, "AQUATIC EMPIRE" BY ROBERT HERACLES, "TOUCH" AND "THIEF SISTERS" BY KOK, "LILLY SWAN" BY MATT FYNCH AND "ENCLAVE" BY SASCHA DÖRP, JUST TO NAME A FEW OF THE ARTISTS.

THENEXTART HAS EXISTED SINCE 2004 AND WITH MORE THAN 200 PUBLICATIONS HAS BECOME AN INDISPENSABLE PART OF THE GERMAN COMIC SCENE.

MORE INFORMATION AT WWW.THENEXTART.DE

THE ARTIST

MICHAEL FELDMANN IS A COMIC ARTIST FROM GERMANY. HE IS A GRADUATE OF THE FREE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS (FREIE AKADEMIE DER BILDENDEN KÜNSTE) IN ESSEN (GERMANY). MICHAEL IS THE CREATOR OF THE COMIC-SERIES **"HADES-SYNDROM"** AND **"SENECA AKTE"**.

HIS PUBLICATIONS (IN GERMAN) FOR THENEXTART SO FAR:

HADES-SYNDROM I - VI (2007 – 2012)
HADES-SYNDROM - REVISED EDITION I - III (2010 – 2013)
HADES-SYNDROM - DER LETZTE GIG (ALBUM VERSION) (2011)
HADES-SYNDROM - CROSSFIRE I AND II (2013)
HADES-SYNDROM - HUNTING SEASON I - VI (2014 – 2015)
HADES-SYNDROM - DER TEST (2015)
HADES-SYNDROM - DER FREIE WILLE (2016)
HADES-SYNDROM - DER LETZTE GIG (COMIC BOOK VERSION) (2017)
HADES-SYNDROM - EPITAPH I - III (2015 – 2018)

PIN UPS (2009)
PIN UPS II (2015)
PIN UPS III (2022)

TNA UNITED I (2014)
TNA UNITED II (2018)

SENECA AKTE I - DIE USTICA-VERSCHWÖRUNG (2017)
SENECA AKTE II - TOD IN GENF (2020)

HIS PUBLICATIONS (IN ENGLISH) FOR THENEXTART SO FAR:

HADES-SYNDROME - HUNTING SEASON (2021)
PIN UPS III (2022)

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE, WHO MADE THIS WHOLE THING COME TRUE BY BACKING US ON KICKSTARTER. THANK YOU VERY MUCH, FOLKS!

ADAM NOBLE BASS
ALAN GREEN
ALEXANDER ASIS BROWN
ALEXANDER NEUMANN
ANDREAS BUCHER-MACK
ANDREAS FRAAS
ANDREAS KALUZA
ANDREAS S.
ANDREW HOOPER
ANSGARD
ANTON OOMS
AXEL
BLAIR GILMORE
CAPTAIN CHAOS
CHIH-CHENG HSIEH
CHLOE FLORENCE
CHRIS ASKHAM
CHRISTIAN
CHRISTIAN WINDMÜLLER
CHRISTOPHER S. ROMAN
CRAIG HACKL
D TAITT
DANIEL SCHMIDT
DARIO CARPINETI
DOM
DOUGLAS LANDY
ELYSIE PEREGRINUS
EMANUELE LACONO
EPSTER
FABS
FIELDHOUSE
FRANZ GEORG RÖSEL
FREDRIK HOLMQVIST
GÜNTER MEIXNER
HDV
HELGE HINRICHS
HENK VAN GIJZEN
HOK
ISAAC 'WILL IT WORK´ DANSICKER
JAMES A MONAGHAN
JAMES W. JACKSON JR
JAN FITZNER
JASPER C
JERAMANCER
JERRE
JIM, MALINKA, CORINKA
JJM
JOCHEN BRAUN
JOHANNES SAMLENSKI
JONATHAN BROWN
JONATHAN KANE
JOSEPH VALENZUELA
JOSHUA CAMP
KENDALLCHAOS
KR4K4T04
KWAN COMICS
LIQUID!
LUTHER DIETRICH
MADMAN_6424
MALCOLM & PARKER CURTIS
MARCO GOLOMBECK
MARCO GRASSI
MARCO SCHUCH
MATTHIAS
MATTI VIREN
MELVIN D EMERSON
MENAHEM GABAY
MICHAEL LONG
MIHAILIS
MILAN HORNICEK
MOHNACH
NICO DÜRNBERGER
PETER SEIDEL
PHILIPPE NIEDERKORN
RAINER + OLGA
RHR
RICHARD NOVAK
ROSS O´NEILL
SADIE COCTEAU
SAM KLEIN
SASCHA DÖRP
SCOTT SCHAPER
SHAUN MACLEOD
SOMERSSKETCH
STEFAN NL
STEINER WALTER
STEVEN BYRD
STUART STILBORN
TH. PESCH
THOMAS "MUELI77" MÜLBRADT
THOMAS NETTA
TOM PHILPOTT
TONY ANJO
VINCE H
WAYNIAK
WILL LORENZO

PoplanScan
for Albert Symphony Orchestra

THE AUDIENCE IS READING